

BLACK LAGOON

107



STORY & ART BY
REI HIROE

PARENTAL ADVISORY
**EXPLICIT
CONTENT**

REI HIROE

It's volume 7. Good job, me.



Rei Hiroe was born on December 5, 1972. After working at a game company, he debuted as a mangaka in 1993. He has been an active illustrator and dojinshi, and has created many titles released through the dojin community. He is best known for his works, *Hisuikyokutan* and *SHOOK UP!* (both currently available in new formats published by Shogakukan) and his first artwork collection, *Barrage*.

BLACK LAGOON

007

VIZ Signature Edition

Story and Art by
REI HIROE

Translation/Joe Yamazaki
Touch-up Art & Lettering/John Hunt, Primary Graphix
Design/Sam Etzway
Editor/Mike Montesa

VP Production/Alvin Lu
VP Sales & Product Marketing/Gonzalo Ferreyra
VP Creative/Linda Espinosa
Publisher/Hyoe Naita

BLACK LAGOON 7 by Rei HIROE © 2007 Rei HIROE
All rights reserved. Original Japanese edition
published in 2007 by Shogakukan Inc., Tokyo.

Logo design by Mikiyo KOBAYASHI + Bay Bridge Studio

Printed in the U.S.A.
Published by VIZ Media, LLC
P.O. Box 77010
San Francisco, CA 94107

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
First printing, August 2009
Second printing, September 2009

The rights of the author(s) of the work(s) in this publication to be so identified have been asserted in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this publication are entirely fictional.

No portion of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without written permission from the copyright holders.

VIZ SIGNATURE
www.vizsignature.com



007

STORY & ART BY
REI HIROE

BLACK LAGOON





Dutch

SKIPPER OF THE OF THE BLACK LAGOON AND LEADER OF THE CREW. DUTCH STAYS COOL NO MATTER HOW BAD THINGS GET. HIS BACKGROUND INCLUDES MILITARY SERVICE, INCLUDING A TOUR IN VIETNAM.

Benny

THE MAN IN CHARGE OF THE HIGH-TECH ELECTRONICS ONBOARD THE BLACK LAGOON. BENNY ESCAPED FROM THE U.S. AND IS ON THE RUN FROM BOTH THE FBI AND THE MAFIA.

Crew of the Black Lagoon

Rock

A FORMER JAPANESE SALARYMAN, WHOSE REAL NAME IS ROKURŌ OKAJIMA. ABANDONED BY HIS COMPANY AFTER THE CREW OF THE BLACK LAGOON ABDUCTED HIM, ROCK LATER JOINED HIS CAPTORS.

Revy

THE BLACK LAGOON'S TOP GUNSLINGER, NICKNAMED 'TWO HAND.' HER FOUL MOUTH AND EXTREMELY SHORT FUSE USUALLY GET HER IN LOTS OF TROUBLE.

STORY

ROCK, FORMERLY KNOWN AS ROKURO OKAJIMA, WAS A FACELESS EMPLOYEE AT A LARGE JAPANESE COMPANY. ABDUCTED BY THE CREW OF THE *BLACK LAGOON* AND CALLOUSLY ABANDONED BY HIS COMPANY, HE TAKES ON THE NAME 'ROCK' AND JOINS THE SMUGGLERS AS AN APPRENTICE SAILOR.

ROANAPUR IS A ROUGH AND TUMBLE CITY WHERE CRIME SYNDICATES FROM AROUND THE WORLD COMPETE FOR THEIR SHARE OF THE BLACK MARKET. JUST AS ROCK AWAKENS TO HIS NEW LIFE AS AN OUTLAW, RUMORS SPREAD THROUGHOUT THE CITY THAT 'THE MAID' ROBERTA HAS RETURNED. WHAT IS ROBERTA DOING IN ROANAPUR AND WHAT DOES SHE WANT?



Chang

BOSS OF THE ROANAPUR
BRANCH OF THE HONG KONG
TRIAD CRIMINAL GANG.



Balalaika

BOSS OF THE THAI BRANCH OF "HOTEL MOSCOW," A NOTED RUSSIAN CRIMINAL GANG. BALALAICA ONCE WAS A CAPTAIN IN THE RED ARMY OF THE FORMER SOVIET UNION.



Fabiola
LOVELACE FAMILY MAID.
ROBERTA'S SUBORDINATE.

Garcia

NEXT HEAD OF THE LOVELACE FAMILY, ONE OF THE 13 FAMILIES OF SOUTH AMERICA. HIS FATHER IS DIEGO LOVELACE.



Roberta

THE LOVELACE FAMILY 'HEAD MATRON.' AN EX-TERRORIST ONCE FEARED AS 'THE BLOODHOUND OF FLORENCIA.'

BLACK LAGOON



STORY & ART BY
REI HIROE

007

Chapter 47: El Baile de la Muerte - Pt. IV	007
Chapter 48: El Baile de la Muerte - Pt. V	027
Chapter 49: El Baile de la Muerte - Pt. VI	043
Chapter 50: El Baile de la Muerte - Pt. VII	059
Chapter 51: El Baile de la Muerte - Pt. VIII	073
Chapter 52: El Baile de la Muerte - Pt. IX	091
Chapter 53: El Baile de la Muerte - Pt. X	121
Chapter 54: El Baile de la Muerte - Pt. XI	145
Chapter 55: El Baile de la Muerte - Pt. XII	167

IT WAS AT
THE FOUNDING
CELEBRATION
OF A NEW
POLITICAL
PARTY.

THE
MOVIMIENTO V
REPÚBLICA,
THE FIFTH
REPUBLIC
MOVEMENT.

AN ARTICLE ON
THE TERRORIST
BOMB ATTACK
LAST MONTH IN
BARINAS,
VENEZUELA.

JUST
AS I
THOUGHT.

FOUND IT
AFTER A
QUICK
SEARCH
OF NEWS
ARTICLES.

IT USED TO
BE AN ILLEGAL
ORGANIZATION,
BUT THEY
APPEAL TO
THE POOR.

THAT'S NOT
EXACTLY
UNUSUAL
FOR SOUTH
AMERICA.

AND
SO?

Chapter 47: El Baile de la Muerte - Part IV

INDEED,
DUTCH.
BUT...

THE PROBLEM
WAS THE
HEAD OF THE
LOVELACE FAMILY
WAS ON THE
STAGE WHEN
THE BOMB WENT
OFF.

SO THE FLIP
SIDE IS THIS
PARTY CAN'T
BE MUCH FUN...

...FOR
ANYONE
HIRING THE
POOR FOR
ABOUT A
NICKEL A DAY.

YEAH,
BUT...

...THERE
AREN'T MANY
RICH FOLKS UP
FOR GETTING
SPRAYED WITH
BULLETS IN THE
JUNGLES OF
BOLIVIA. AND-

CHE
GUEVARA
CAME FROM A
WEALTHY
FAMILY TOO,
BENNY.

...WHAT?

THAT'S
RIGHT,
DUTCH.
THAT'S
EXACTLY
WHY...

...HE STOOD
OUT AMONG THE
THIRTEEN FAMILIES
THAT CONTROL THE
SOUTH AMERICAN
ECONOMY. PRETTY
IRONIC.

THERE ARE EVEN
FEWER WILLING
TO HAVE THEIR
ASSES BLOWN
OFF FOR
SUPPORTING A
LEFT-WING
PARTY.

IS THAT
WHAT
YOU'RE
TRYING
TO SAY?

HE AND
THE PARTY
LEADER
WERE
FRIENDS.

HE WAS ALSO
A LIBERAL,
WHICH IS
RARE FOR
THEIR KIND.

THE CALDERA
ADMINISTRATION
EXPRESSED ITS
REGRETS AND
ENLARGED THEIR
MILITARY POLICE
FORCE TO PREVENT
ANOTHER INCIDENT.

THEY ALSO
MADE VEILED
THREATS
AGAINST THOSE
INVOLVED IN THE
MOVEMENT AND
THIS CASE WAS
CLOSED.

...LET'S
GET BACK
TO THE
SUBJECT.

SOME SAY FARC
WAS RESPONSIBLE
FOR THE BOMBING,
OTHERS SAY
IT WAS THE
PARAMILITARIES,
BUT THE TRUTH IS
STILL IN THE DARK.

BUT...

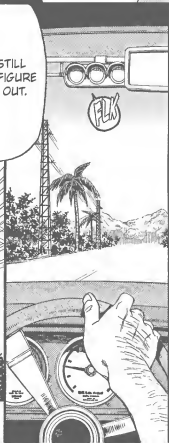
...WHY HERE
AND NOT
BOGATA OR
CARACAS?

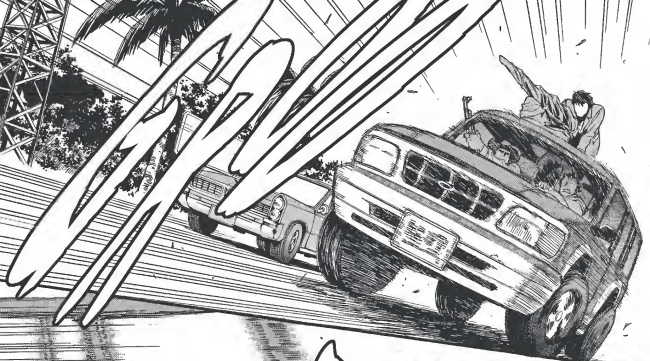
AS FOR
THAT CRAZY
MAID'S
MOTIVE,
IT'S PRETTY
CLEAR.

SHE WANTS
REVENGE FOR
HER MASTER'S
DEATH.

...I STILL
CAN'T FIGURE
THAT OUT.

THAT'S
WHERE
THE
LEADS—





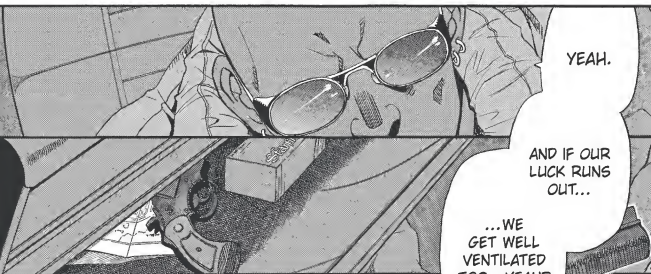
HERE'S A
LITTLE
PREDICTION

...

WE'RE GONNA
NEED TO TAKE
A RAIN CHECK
ON THOSE
DRINKS ONCE
WE GET TO
THE BAR.

YEAH,
I SAW
THAT.

BENNY.



YEAH.

AND IF OUR
LUCK RUNS
OUT...

...WE
GET WELL
VENTILATED
TOO...YEAH?



STEP ON
IT, BENNY.

K

LK



RNG

RNG

RNG

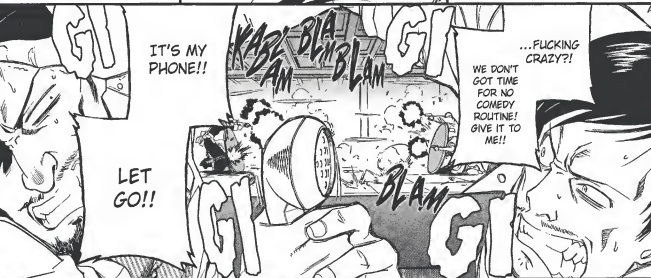


ARE
YOU...



DON'T
YOU
ANSWER
THAT.

I DON'T
WANT ANY
MORE
TROUBLE.



IT'S MY
PHONE!!

LET
GO!!

...FUCKING
CRAZY?!

WE DON'T
GOT TIME
FOR NO
COMEDY
ROUTINE!
GIVE IT TO
ME!!



IT'S LIKE
SATURDAY
NIGHT LIVE!

ROCK!
LOOK!
LOOK!



JUST
GIMME
THE DAMN
PHONE!

FUCK YOU! YOU
AIN'T CALLING
NO MORE OF
YOUR STUPID
FRIENDS HERE!

IS THAT
HOW YOU
WANNA
PLAY, BAO-

JUST
SHUT
UP!!

WE'RE IN
FRONT OF
YELLOW
FLAG!

GUSTAVO!

JOSÉ!
HEAVY
WEAPON!

WHADDA
YA WANT
US TO
DO?!

YOU
ON THE
TECHNICAL
WITH THE
.50 CAL?!



FIRE THAT
THING INTO
THE BAR!



YEAH!
THE
FOUR-
WHEEL
DRIVE-



DON'T
SHOOT!
DON'T
SHOOT!

YOU CRAZY
FUCKING
SPIC!



GOOD
JOB,
CHICO!



DON'T
LISTEN
TO HIM!
SHOOT!
SHOOT!

GRAB

PULL



GYA HA

BAO,
SHUT
UP!

HA
HA
HA



WE GOT
CUT OFF!!

HELLO?!
HELLO?!
SHIT!

GUSTAVO
?!



NOW I'M
GONNA
HAVE TO
REBUILD
AGAIN!

HEH
HEH
HEH...

PLACE IS A
SHITHOLE
ANYWAY. I'M
DOIN' YOU A
FAVOR, BAO.

FORGET
THAT!

THAT
LITTLE
BITCH GET
BLOWN TO
BITS YET!?

WHO KNOWS?

AS FAR
AS I CAN
TELL...





THERE'S
NO
REASON
TO BE
LOYAL TO
HIM!

TAKE THE
INJURED
...

...AND GO
OUT THE
BACK WHILE
YOU CAN!!



LISTEN
UP, YOU
SCUMBAGS!

YOUR BOSS
IS A PIG! HE
DOESN'T
GIVE A DAMN
ABOUT YOU!



NOW GET
OUTTA
HERE!

IF YOU
STILL
WANNA
STICK
AROUND...
...YOU
CAN DIE
HERE
WITH ME!



HOW
REFRESHING.

BUT SHE
WON'T LIVE
LONG LIKE
THAT.

WHOA
...

SHE'S
LIKE THE
SHERIFF.



T W P



THE HEAD
MATRON WAS
RIGHT! THIS
PLACE...

...IS
HORRIBLE!

ZWP

CHK

WHAT...
...THE
HELL IS
THAT?

NOBODY
HERE
THINKS
TWICE ABOUT
WAVING
THEIR GUNS
AROUND.

THIS
PLACE...

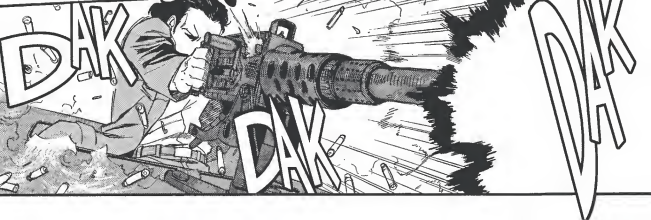
...REALLY
IS THE
WORST!

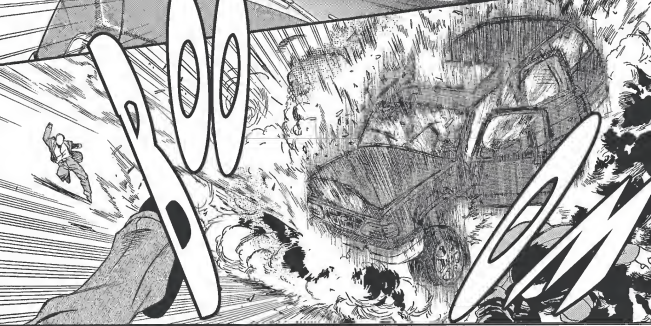
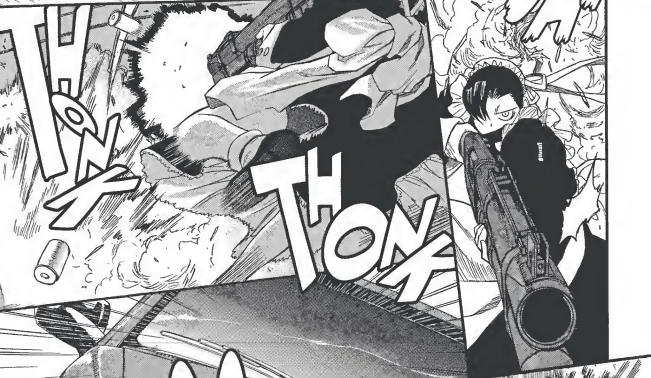
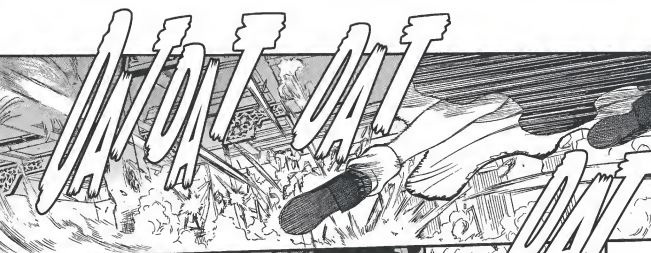
SH

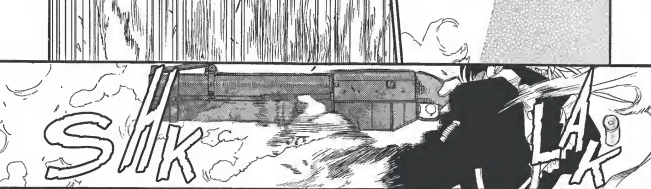




WHAT'RE
YOU
DOIN'?!
FIRE!
FIRE!







HEY!
CUT
THAT
OUT!

YOU'RE
TURNING
MY
PLACE
INTO
AN
OUTDOOR
CAFE!!



WAAAGH!

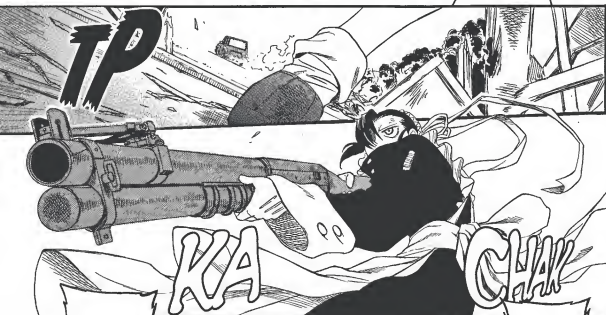
WAIT!
HOLD
UP!



SAY IT SO
THEY CAN
HEAR YOU,
GUSTAVO!

THAT
STUPID
IDIOT!

THE BITCH
IS STILL
ALIVE!
COME
BACK, YOU
COWARDS!



GUSTAVO'S
DEAD!

IT
WAS—

BOSS?! IS
THAT YOU,
BOSS?!

THO

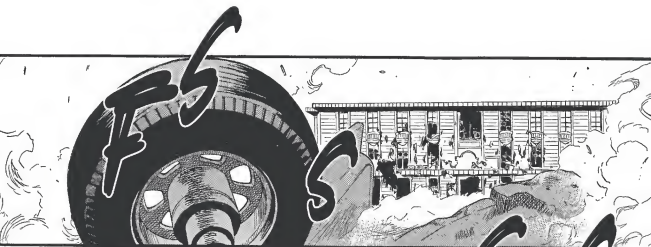
OM

KSHAK

...

MY
GOD...

THIS PLACE IS
ABSOLUTELY
WRETCHED!!

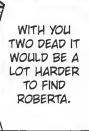


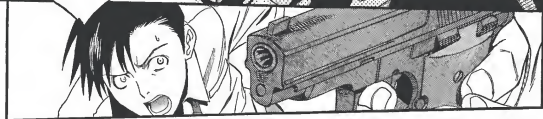
Chapter 48: El Baile de la Muerte - Part V



THIS PLACE IS
ABSOLUTELY
WRETCHED!!

...
MY
GOD...



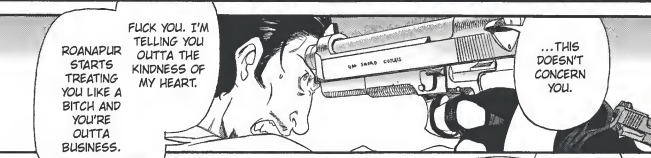




THAT LITTLE
GIRL FUCKED
YOU IN THE
ASS...

AND YOU
WANNA
EMBARRASS
YOURSELF
EVEN MORE
ON TOP OF
THAT?

IT IS
OVER,
GUSTAVO.



ROANAPUR
STARTS
TREATING
YOU LIKE A
BITCH AND
YOU'RE
OUTTA
BUSINESS.

FUCK YOU. I'M
TELLING YOU
OUTTA THE
KINDNESS OF
MY HEART.

...THIS
DOESN'T
CONCERN
YOU.



...SHIT!

AND YOU
WON'T BE
KNOWN AS
THE GUY
WHO SHOT A
KID IN THE
BACK. OKAY?

YOU BACK
OFF NOW
AND YOU
STILL GOT
A CHANCE
TO GET
BACK ON
YOUR FEET.



YOU
LITTLE
BITCH-

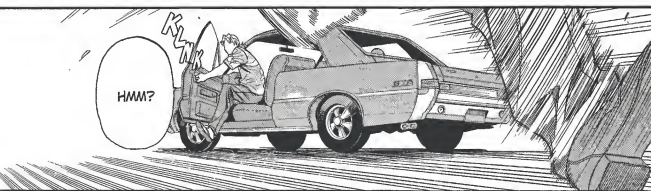
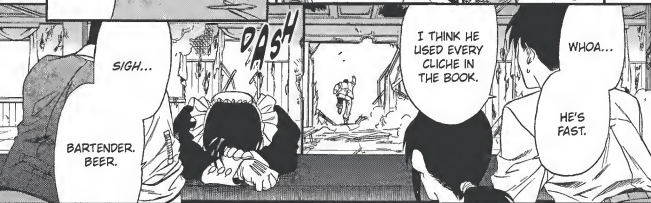
YOUR MEN ARE
SLIMY AND
STUPID, AND
THEY STINK
LIKE A STABLE.

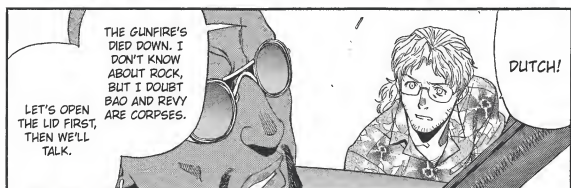
THEY ARE
EXTREMELY
UNPLEASANT, SO
PLEASE DON'T
EVER SHOW
YOUR FACE TO
ME AGAIN.

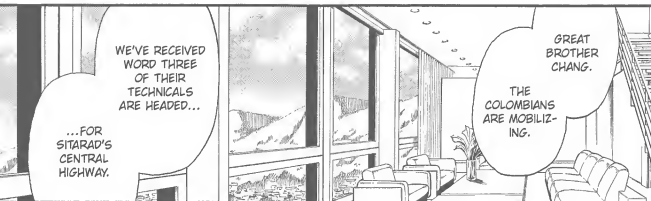
YOU
GOT
LUCKY,
KID!

BUT
REMEMBER
THIS.

IT WON'T
BE LIKE
THIS THE
NEXT
TIME!





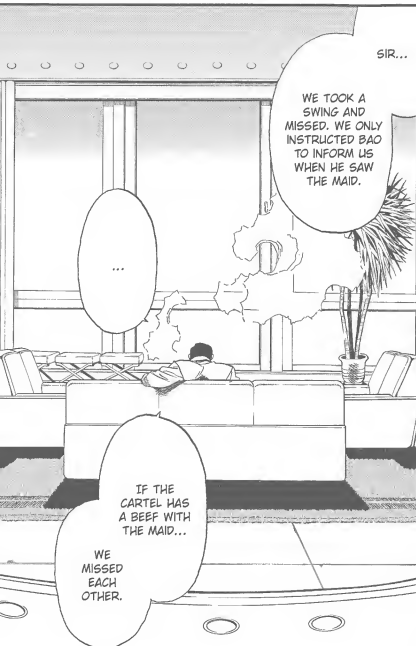


WE'VE RECEIVED
WORD THREE
OF THEIR
TECHNICALS
ARE HEADED...

...FOR
SITARAD'S
CENTRAL
HIGHWAY.

GREAT
BROTHER
CHANG.

THE
COLOMBIANS
ARE MOBILIZ-
ING.



SIR...

WE TOOK A
SWING AND
MISSED. WE ONLY
INSTRUCTED BAO
TO INFORM US
WHEN HE SAW
THE MAID.

...

IF THE
CARTEL HAS
A BEEF WITH
THE MAID...

WE
MISSED
EACH
OTHER.



THE ONLY THINGS
DOWN THERE ARE
A HUGE LOADING
AREA, WARE-
HOUSES AND THE
YELLOW FLAG.

BIU.

WHAT'S
GOING ON
AT THE
YELLOW
FLAG?



FRY-FACE
WOULDN'T
TELL ME
MUCH.

...
GREAT
BROTHER.

...THIS MAID,
IS SHE REALLY
WHAT SHE'S
RUMORED
TO BE?



SHE'S
UNPREDICT-
ABLE. RISKING
HER NECK
OVER LAGOON.

THINGS FLARED
UP THE LAST
TIME SHE WAS
HERE, WHEN SHE
CAME TO RESCUE
THE BOY THE
COLOMBIANS
KIDNAPPED.

THERE WAS NO
LOGIC OR GAIN IN
IT, SO SHE TOOK
A WAIT-AND-SEE
ATTITUDE. BUT...

...NOT
THIS
TIME.



...WELL
THEN.

...WHAT DO
WE DO?

THERE'S
NOTHING TO
GAIN BY GOING
TO THE YELLOW
FLAG NOW.

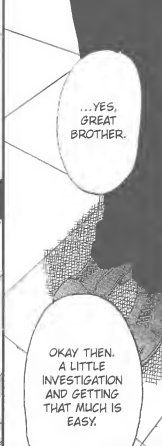
EVEN MORE SO
IF THE MAID IS
WHO FRY-FACE
SAID SHE WAS.



BUT...

THE
IDENTITY...

...OF
HER ENEMY
STILL ISN'T
CLEAR.



...YES,
GREAT
BROTHER.

OKAY THEN.
A LITTLE
INVESTIGATION
AND GETTING
THAT MUCH IS
EASY.

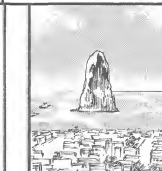


BIL.

SHE'S OUT
FOR REVENGE
BECAUSE
OF THAT
TERRORIST
BOMB ATTACK
THAT BLEW HER
MASTER TO
BITS, RIGHT?

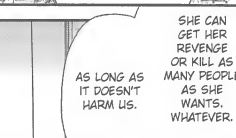


...HER TARGET
IS HERE. THE
BLOODHOUND
CAME TO TOWN
FOLLOWING THE
SCENT OF HER
PREY.



THE MAID
SHIFTED HER
FOCUS HERE
FOR HER FOX
HUNT.

THAT
MEANS...



AS LONG AS
IT DOESN'T
HARM US.

SHE CAN
GET HER
REVENGE
OR KILL AS
MANY PEOPLE
AS SHE
WANTS.
WHATEVER.

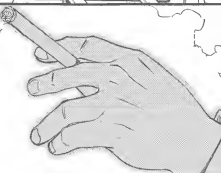


I DON'T
CARE ABOUT
SOME CRAZY
EX-GUERILLA
MAID.

...YOU
SEE,
BIL.



...SOMEONE IS
HIDING OUT HERE
THAT EVEN I
CAN'T IDENTIFY.



BUT
WHAT'S REALLY
BOTHERING ME
LIKE A LEAKY
TOILET IS...

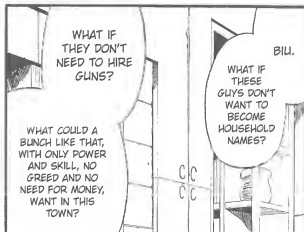




AND THAT
RUBS ME THE
WRONG WAY.

SOMEONE
WHO COULD
TAKE OUT ONLY
THOSE WHO
WERE ON THE
PLATFORM,
AMONG THE
HUNDREDS ON
THE SCENE AT
THE BOMBING.

SOMEBODY WITH
THAT KIND OF
SKILL, WHOSE
PURPOSE WE
DON'T KNOW, IS
HIDING OUT IN
THIS TOWN.



WHAT IF
THEY DON'T
NEED TO HIRE
GUNS?

BIU.

WHAT IF
THESE
GUYS DON'T
WANT TO
BECOME
HOUSEHOLD
NAMES?

WHAT COULD A
BUNCH LIKE THAT,
WITH ONLY POWER
AND SKILL, NO
GREED AND NO
NEED FOR MONEY,
WANT IN THIS
TOWN?



...BUT GREAT
BROTHER, WE
KNOW THE
BACKGROUNDS
OF JUST
ABOUT EVERY-
BODY IN THE
CITY.

INCLUDING
ANYONE WHO
ARRIVED HERE
RECENTLY. WE'D
HEAR ABOUT
SOMEONE WITH
THAT KIND OF
SKILL WHETHER
WE WANT TO
OR NOT.



WE SHOULD DO
A BACKGROUND
CHECK ON
EVERYONE,
INCLUDING
ANYONE NOT
INVOLVED IN
ROANAPUR'S
PROFIT-MAKING
ENTERPRISES.

STILL,
THAT'S ALL
SPECULATION.



...TO
VISIT THEM
WITHOUT
DISRESPECTING
THEM, WE'LL
NEED AN
APPROPRIATE
EXCUSE.

THE
COLOMBIANS
ARE CLOSEST
TO THE TRUTH
FOR THE TIME
BEING. BUT...

IN ANY
CASE...



...
AT THE END
OF THE
DAY...

IT'S BEST
WE GO ASK
THOSE WHO
ARE INVOLVED,
I GUESS.



...THEN
AGAIN...

ROANAPUR
IS STILL
UNSTABLE.

IT'S NOT
WISE TO STIR
THINGS UP
UNNECESSARILY.



IT MIGHT
NOT BE A
BAD IDEA...

...TO GET
INTRODUCTIONS
OUT OF THE
WAY OVER A
DRINK.

BIU.

LET'S
GO FOR
A WALK.

VR

OO



THE SHORT
VERSION OF
THE KILLER MAID
SHOWED UP.

NOT ONLY
WAS THE
PLACE TURNED
INTO AN
OUTDOOR
CAFE...
I'M
SHOCKED.



...ARE OF
THAT
AGE.
NEITHER
THE HEAD
MATRON
NOR I...

WHAT ARE
YOU?

HER
DAUGHTER?



PLEASE
DON'T
TOUCH
ME!

YO, YO,
LOLITA.

YOU GOT A
GRENADE
STICKIN'
OUT.

OH
BROTHER.

TWO
SURPRISES
IN A ROW.
WHAT'S NEXT?



YOU'RE
PRETTY
FUSSY FOR
A KID.

BUT
ANYWAY...

IT WAS
THE HEAD
MATRON'S
CHOICE.

AND
PLEASE
TAKE BACK
"FUCKING
FOUR
EYES."

BUT
MAN...

BOTH YOU
AND THAT
FUCKING
FOUR
EYES...

...GOT A
THING FOR
STRANGE
HARDWARE,
DON'T YA?





I HAVE DREAMS ABOUT LIVIN' IN THE SUITES HERE, EH, BENNY?

I'M JEALOUS. THIS IS THE CLASSIEST HOTEL IN TOWN.



YOU GOT IT.

ROCK, GRAB HER STUFF FROM THE TRUNK.

I THINK IT'S IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER WHERE WE STAND, DUTCH.



...
MY LEGS SEEM TO BE STIFF. WILL YOU GIVE ME A HAND?

WHAT AM I, YOUR NANNY?!

FINE. HERE...!



LIM...

E-EXCUSE ME...?

HUH?

WHAT ?







...WELL,
IF IT ISN'T
THE LAGOON
TRADERS.



YOU'RE
LATE.



I
HAPPEN TO
HAVE SOME
BUSINESS
WITH THE
YOUNG
MASTER AS
WELL...

I HOPE
YOU'LL
PARDON THE
INTRUSION...



WELL...

IF IT
ISN'T THE
LAGOON
TRADERS.
YOU'RE
LATE.

I HAPPEN
TO HAVE SOME
BUSINESS WITH
THE YOUNG
MASTER AS
WELL...

I HOPE YOU'LL
PARDON THE
INTRUSION...

Chapter 49: El Baile de la Muerte - Part VI



YOU
THUG!!

...
GET AWAY
FROM THE
YOUNG
MASTER...

SH

AK



...NOT
HERE
FOR A
SHOOT-OUT.

CALM
DOWN...

LITTLE
MISS MAID.
I'M...



...TO TALK
TO THE
YOUNG
MASTER.
NOTHING
MORE,
NOTHING
LESS.

I
DIDN'T
COME
HERE WITH
THREATS OR
RIDICULE.

I'M
HERE...



THIS
TOWN IS
AS FILTHY
AS THE
HEAD
MATRON
SAID!

DO NOT
LET YOUR
GUARD
DOWN,
YOUNG
MASTER!

...!



WHAT HE
SAYS IS
TRUE,
FABIOLA.

FOR
NOW.



YOU'RE
QUITE
RIGHT,
MISS
MAID.

YES
INDEED.

THIS
TOWN IS
A CESSPIT
FILLED
WITH SCUM.



HAH.

WAY
TO TALK
ABOUT
US.



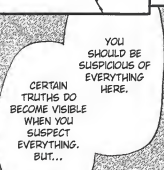
IN JUST
THREE DAYS
SINCE I
ARRIVED HERE,
I'VE ALREADY
BEEN INVOLVED
IN A GUNFIGHT.

THE PEOPLE
OF THIS
TOWN ARE
ALL SCUM!



...REMAINING
OBSERVANT
UNTIL ALL THE
CARDS ARE
DEALT...

...IS
ANOTHER
WAY TO
FIND THE
TRUTH.



YOU
SHOULD BE
SUSPICIOUS OF
EVERYTHING
HERE.

CERTAIN
TRUTHS DO
BECOME VISIBLE
WHEN YOU
SUSPECT
EVERYTHING.
BUT...



KKK

...

YES,
YOUNG
MASTER.



...

FABIOLA.



MY APOLOGIES.

PLEASE, COME IN.

SORRY TO INTERRUPT, BUT WE'RE GETTING LONELY OUT HERE.

MIND IF WE SIT?

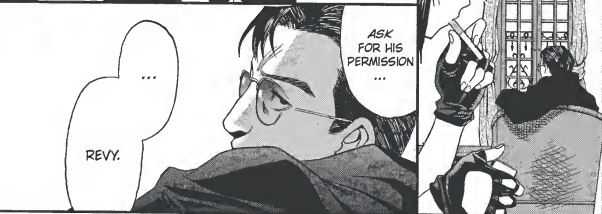


HAH!

GIMME A BREAK, MAN.

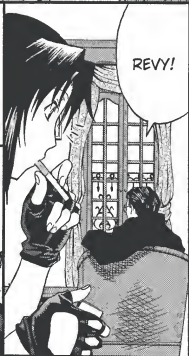
THIS ISN'T YOUR ROOM.

ASK FOR HIS PERMISSION IF YOU WANNA SMOKE.

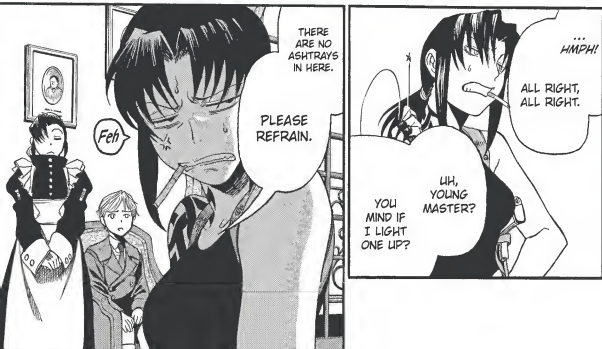


ASK FOR HIS PERMISSION ...

REVY.



REVY!



THERE ARE NO ASHTRAYS IN HERE.

PLEASE REFRAIN.

Feh

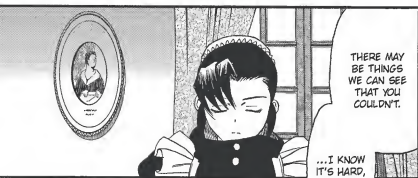


... HMPH!

ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT.

UH, YOUNG MASTER?
YOU MIND IF I LIGHT ONE UP?





THERE MAY
BE THINGS
WE CAN SEE
THAT YOU
COULDN'T.

...I KNOW
IT'S HARD,
BUT...



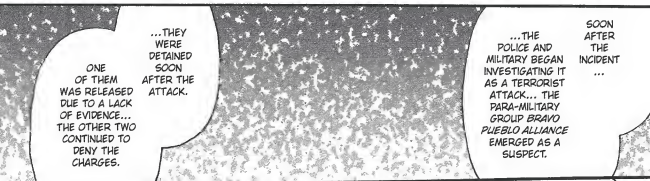
I THANK YOU
FOR YOUR
CONCERN,
MR. ROCK.

...WHERE
SHOULD I
BEGIN...



GARCIA
...

WILL
YOU TELL
US WHAT
HAPPENED
FROM THE
VERY
BEGINNING?

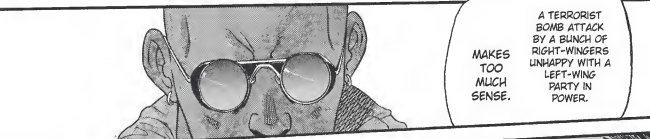


ONE
OF THEM
WAS RELEASED
DUE TO A LACK
OF EVIDENCE...
THE OTHER TWO
CONTINUED TO
DENY THE
CHARGES.

...THEY
WERE
DETAINED
SOON
AFTER THE
ATTACK.

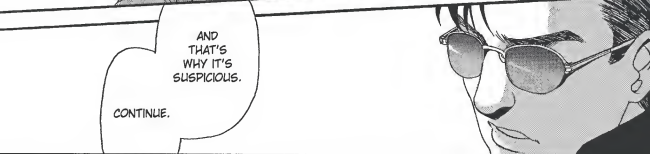
...THE
POLICE AND
MILITARY BEGAN
INVESTIGATING IT
AS A TERRORIST
ATTACK... THE
PARA-MILITARY
GROUP BRAVO
PUEBLO ALLIANCE
EMERGED AS A
SUSPECT.

SOON
AFTER
THE
INCIDENT
...



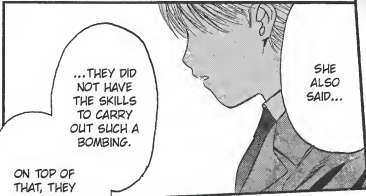
MAKES
TOO
MUCH
SENSE.

A TERRORIST
BOMB ATTACK
BY A BUNCH OF
RIGHT-WINGERS
UNHAPPY WITH A
LEFT-WING
PARTY IN
POWER.



AND
THAT'S
WHY IT'S
SUSPICIOUS.

CONTINUE.



...THEY DID NOT HAVE THE SKILLS TO CARRY OUT SUCH A BOMBING.

SHE ALSO SAID...

YES.

WE TOO... NO, ROBERTA ALSO HAD THE SAME DOUBTS.

ON TOP OF THAT, THEY HAD NO REASON TO HAVE SUCH SKILLS.



BUT...

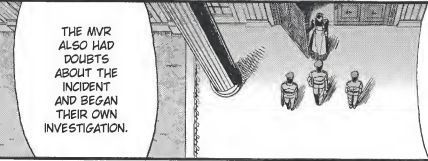


...WE ALMOST GAVE UP AND TRIED TO ACCEPT THEIR OFFICIAL POSITION.

THE POLICE ARE ACTING AS IF THE CASE IS SOLVED. WE HAVEN'T HEARD FROM THEM SINCE THE ARRESTS.

THAT IT MADE TOO MUCH SENSE.

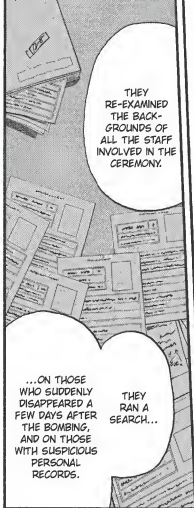
THAT IS UNTIL...



THE MVR ALSO HAD DOUBTS ABOUT THE INCIDENT AND BEGAN THEIR OWN INVESTIGATION.

THIS INDIVIDUAL WAS AN OFFICER OF A PARATROOP UNIT ALIGNED WITH THE MVR.

...A CERTAIN PERSON PAID US A VISIT.



THEY
RE-EXAMINED
THE BACK-
GROUNDS OF
ALL THE STAFF
INVOLVED IN THE
CEREMONY.

...ON THOSE
WHO SUDDENLY
DISAPPEARED A
FEW DAYS AFTER
THE BOMBING,
AND ON THOSE
WITH SUSPICIOUS
PERSONAL
RECORDS.

THEY
RAN A
SEARCH...



...YOU
ARE
EXACTLY
RIGHT.

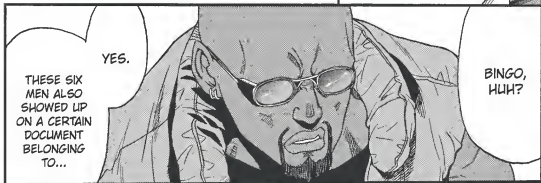
HE
OBVIOUSLY
HAS STRONG
TIES TO THE
VENEZUELAN
DEPARTMENT OF
DEFENSE.

HE
CAME TO
INFORM US
WHAT HE HAD
DISCOVERED
UP TO THAT
POINT IN HIS
INVESTIGATION.



THE MVR WAS
ORIGINALLY A
MOVEMENT
STARTED BY A
GENERAL OF THE
VENEZUELAN
PARATROOPERS.

HE HAS A LOT
OF FANATICAL
SYMPATHIZERS
WITHIN THE
UNIT.
IT'S
PROBABLY
BEST TO LOOK
INTO IT FROM
THAT ANGLE.



YES.

THESE SIX
MEN ALSO
SHOWED UP
ON A CERTAIN
DOCUMENT
BELONGING
TO...

BINGO,
HUH?



THEIR NAMES
WERE FORGED,
BUT THE
PHOTOS WERE
THE SAME AS
THE PHOTOS
ON THE
STAFF LIST.

THEY
INTENTIONALLY
PARTICIPATED
IN THE
CEREMONY.

...THE
DGIM.*

*DGIM - DIRECCIÓN GENERAL DE INTELIGENCIA MILITAR;
THE MILITARY INTELLIGENCE DIRECTORATE OF VENEZUELA



AND ON THE DAY
OF THE BOMBING,
THEY WERE IN
CHARGE OF
SECURITY FOR
THE STAGE.

...LEFT THE
INTELLIGENCE
BUREAU TWO
MONTHS BEFORE
THE BOMBING,
AS IF IT WERE
PREARRANGED.

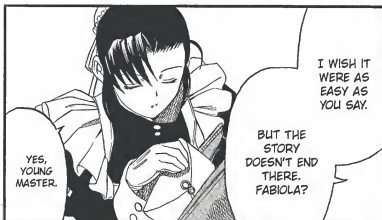
THESE
SIX
MEN...



...NO.

YOU GOT
NOTHING
TO WORRY
ABOUT, KID.

JUST STAY HOME
PLUCKING YOUR
NOSE HAIRS AND
SHE'LL PUT 'EM
ALL AWAY AND
COME RIGHT
BACK.



YES,
YOUNG
MASTER.

BUT THE
STORY
DOESN'T END
THERE.
FABIOLA?

I WISH IT
WERE AS
EASY AS
YOU SAY.



FUCK,
IS THAT
IT?

YOU GUYS
ARE SCARED
OF THESE
SMALL-
TIMERS?

AGAINST
FOUR EYES,
THEY'RE
NOT EVEN A
PIECE OF
CAKE,
THEY'RE
TWINKIES.

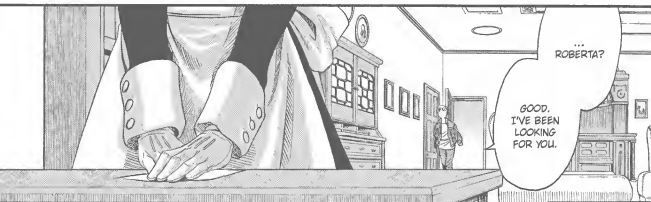


IT WAS
TAKEN SIX
MONTHS
BEFORE THE
BOMBING AT
THE BOLIVAR
GRANDE IN
CENTRAL
CARACAS.

COINCIDENTALLY,
IT WAS TAKEN
BY A MILITARY
POLICE OFFICER
INVESTIGATING
A SEPARATE
CORRUPTION
CASE.

PLEASE TAKE
A LOOK AT
THIS.

IT IS A
PHOTO I
RECEIVED
FROM THE
GENERAL IN
QUESTION.





ARE YOU
OKAY?

ARE
YOU NOT
FEELING
WELL?

NO.

I
WAS JUST
THINKING
ABOUT
SOMETHING.
I'M SORRY.



ROBERTA
...?

...



ROBERTA
...
I'M...
WORRIED.

MR. HIDALGO
WILL TAKE OVER
MANAGEMENT
OF THE MINE,
AND...

...WITH
SO MANY
OFFERING
TO HELP
SINCE THE
FUNERAL,
THE FARM
IS...

WHAT IS
THERE TO
WORRY
ABOUT,
YOUNG
MASTER?



OH...

I DIDN'T
HEAR YOU
COME IN.

YOUNG
MASTER.

...YOU,
ROBERTA.

...WORRIED
ABOUT IS...

NO.
WHAT
I'M...

WHEN YOU
EAT, WHEN
YOU'RE ON
BREAK.

...YOU'VE
STOPPED
TALKING.

SINCE MY
FATHER'S
FUNERAL...

YOU
PROBABLY
DON'T
REALIZE
IT, BUT...

SQUEEZE

THAT'S
WHY
...
I...?

...
YOUNG
MASTER.

...IN
ROANAPUR?

DO
YOU...

...REMEMBER
WHAT HAPPENED
THAT NIGHT...



...
YOUNG
MASTER.

A
LOT...

...
HAPPENED
THAT
NIGHT.

...UH
HUH.

I'M
SORRY TO
SAY THIS
NOW...

SO I
WON'T
FORGET.

...I CAN'T
FORGET.

I
REMEMBER.



...UNTIL THE
VERY END.

THE
MASTER
...

...WAS
AGAINST
ME GOING
THERE...

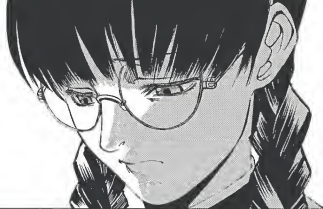


...WERE
IN HIS
POSITION...

...I
WOULD'VE
SAID THE
SAME THING.

I
KNOW.

IF
I...



WHAT?

AH...

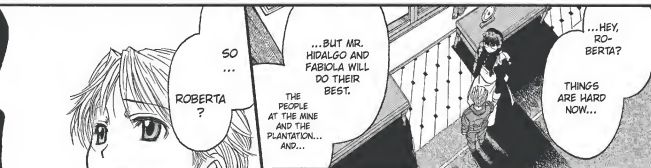
THE
BOTH OF
YOU...



YOU
REALLY
ARE HIS
SON.

NOTHING.

YOUNG
MASTER
...



SO
...

ROBERTA
?

...BUT MR.
HIDALGO AND
FABIOLA WILL
DO THEIR
BEST.

THE
PEOPLE
AT THE MINE
AND THE
PLANTATION...
AND...

...HEY,
RO-
BERTA?

THINGS
ARE HARD
NOW...



YOU WON'T
BE GOING
ANYWHERE,
RIGHT?

THINGS WILL
BE BETTER
TOMORROW.
SO...

THERE
ARE A LOT
OF OTHER
PEOPLE
THAT'LL
HELP US.



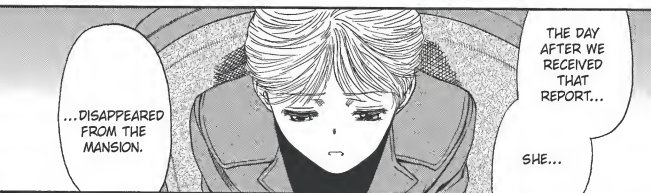
ROBERTA

...

...WILL
ALWAYS BE
NEAR YOU.

...YES.

YOUNG
MASTER.



...DISAPPEARED
FROM THE
MANSION.

THE DAY
AFTER WE
RECEIVED
THAT
REPORT...

SHE...



WHAT'S
THIS?

IT'S
PRETTY
SMALL.
THIRTY
BOLIVAR
FOR THIS?



THEN BUY
IT AT THE
CARACAS
MARKET,
YOUNG
MAN.

DON'T
YOU
AGREE,
SEÑORA?

IT'D BE
ABOUT
SIXTEEN
BOLIVAR
AT THE
MARKET
IN CARACAS.

Chapter 50: El Baile de la Muerte - Part VII

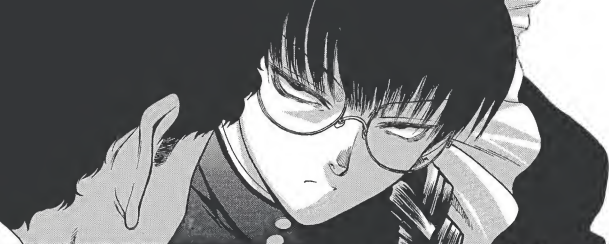


OH
WELL.

TWENTY
BOLIVAR
FOR THIS
BIG ONE
RIGHT HERE.

YOU GOT A
PROBLEM
WITH MY
PRICES, YOU
DON'T HAVE
TO COME
ANYMORE.







PRRP

PRRP

PRRP

PRRP

I
KNOW!

PU

PU



I'LL
ASK HIM
WHERE
THEY
ARE...

MENDEZ
SHOULD
BE AT EL
SOMBRERO
...

SHIT!

...I
DON'T
LIKE
THIS!

NOBODY
SHOULD
KNOW I'M
HERE!

WAS
IT ONE
OF MY
GUYS?!



PICK UP,
MENDEZ!

C'MON!
C'MON!
C'MON!



MENDEZ?!
IT'S ME!

IT'S
LUCIENDEZ!
WHERE ARE
MY MEN-

PRRP
...
BEEP





AS I
SAID...

...ONCE
I SEE A
FACE I
NEVER
FORGET
IT.



YOU
WERE AT
THE FOUNDING
CELEBRATION.

DIRECCIÓN
GENERAL DE
INTELIGENCIA
MILITAR.

MAJOR
MARCOS JOSÉ
LUCIENDEZ.





URGH!

AGH!

STARTING
WITH MR.
MENDEZ...

...I'VE
HAD THE
OPPORTUNITY
TO MEET ALL
YOUR MEN.



YOU...

...BUT IN
THE END,
IT SEEMS
ONLY YOU...
...HAVE THE
INFORMATION I
AM SEEKING.



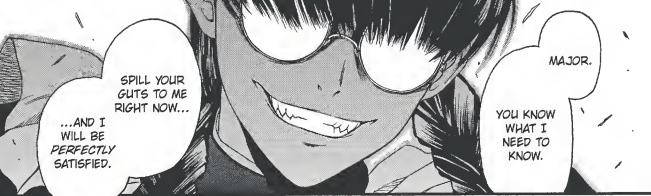
DON'T
TELL ME
YOU...

NO!

WE AGREED
TO AVOID
EACH OTHER
UNTIL THE
MISSION WAS
OFFICIALLY
COMPLETED!

YOU
TRACKED
EVERYONE
DOWN...
AND KILLED
THEM?!





SPILL YOUR
GUTS TO ME
RIGHT NOW...

...AND I
WILL BE
PERFECTLY
SATISFIED.

MAJOR.

YOU KNOW
WHAT I
NEED TO
KNOW.



I
REQUESTED
HE NOTIFY
ME ONCE HE
LOCATED THE
MEN IN THE
PHOTO.

I DIDN'T
TELL THE
OFFICER...

THAT
NOTIFICATION
CAME QUICKLY.

...ABOUT
ROBERTA'S
DISAPPEARANCE.



JOSÉ
LUCIENDEZ,
THE MAN
ON THE
FAR
RIGHT.
HIS BODY WAS
FOUND IN A
RIVER ON THE
OUTSKIRTS OF
CARABOSO.

HE
WAS...

...FOUND
WITH SEVERE
WOUNDS
BELOW HIS
KNEES.



SHE
IDENTIFIED
THE MEN
OF THE
INTELLIGENCE
BUREAU
FROM A
SINGLE
PHOTO...

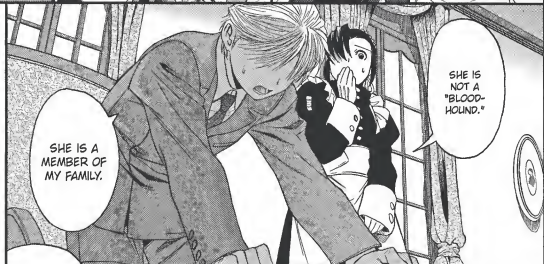
...AND
HUNTED
THEM
DOWN.

LIKE THE
BLOODHOUND
SHE TRULY IS.



HE WAS
TORTURED,
KIDDO.

THE KIND
OF TORTURE
EVEN THE
GESTAPO
WOULD RUN
AWAY FROM
BARE-
FOOTED.





WITH
LUCIENDEZ'S
BODY FOUND
AND THE
WHEREABOUTS
OF FOUR OF
HIS MEN STILL
UNKNOWN...

PLEASE
TAKE A
LOOK AT
THIS PHOTO
ONE MORE
TIME.

THERE
ARE FOUR
CAUCASIAN
MEN BESIDES
LUCIENDEZ.

BACK
TO THE
DISCUSSION.

...ONLY THE
SECOND MAN
FROM THE
RIGHT WAS
TRACKED
DOWN...

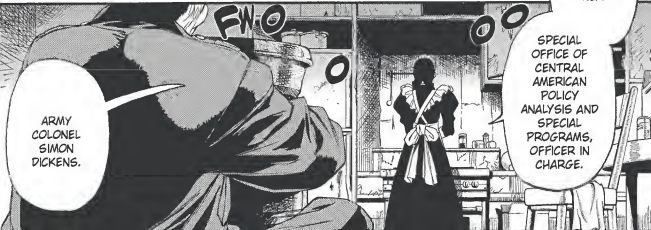


YOU
KNOW
WHO I
AM.

YOU
KNOW...



...THE
UNITED
STATES OF
AMERICA,
NSA.



ARMY
COLONEL
SIMON
DICKENS.

SPECIAL
OFFICE OF
CENTRAL
AMERICAN
POLICY
ANALYSIS AND
SPECIAL
PROGRAMS,
OFFICER IN
CHARGE.

FW

WHAT
DO YOU
WANT?

YOU'RE
NOT A
ROBBER OR
KIDNAPPER.

I'M
SURPRISED
YOU KNOW
ALL THAT.

HERE'S A
QUESTION
FOR YOU.

YOU
BANDERA
ROJAS?
OR AN MVR
EXTREMIST?

KZANK
KRKL
KRKL
KRKL

WHAT'RE
YOU...

TONK

NO, WAIT...

...!

ACCORDING
TO WHAT
MARCOS
TOLD ME...

...ARE
YOUR
DOGS?

SO
WHERE
...

THE
TERRORIST
BOMBING IN
CARACAS LAST
SEPTEMBER
...
... WAS
PLANNED
AND
EXECUTED
BY YOU
AND YOUR
DOGS.

FW

IT WOULD
SAVE A
GREAT DEAL
OF HASSLE IF
YOU WOULD
TELL ME...

...WHILE THE
STOVE IS STILL
AT BODY
TEMPERATURE.

FZZ

FZZ

FZZ

N

WHERE
ARE YOUR
DOGS?

...YOU
ROTTEN
PIECE OF
SHIT.

KEEP
TALKING...

AAH!

AAARGH
!!

KL
N
K

...THAT'S
NUMBER
TWO.

WHERE
ARE YOUR
DOGS?



KT

OK



I'M
LOOKING
FORWARD
TO IT.

BY THE
WAY...

WOULD
YOU LIKE
ANOTHER?

A BODY
WAS FOUND
AT THE SCENE
OF A FIRE AT
A MOTEL
OUTSIDE
CARACAS.

...IT
WAS...

...COLONEL
SIMON
DICKENS.
HE
WAS...

...OF THE
UNITED
STATES
ARMY.

...AN
ACTIVE
OFFICER...

Chapter 51: El Baile de la Muerte - Part VIII

THEY ALSO
DISCOVERED SHE
HAD RESERVED A
LONG DISTANCE
BUS TICKET TO
ROANAPUR AT
THE AIRPORT.

SHE HAD
A TICKET TO
THAILAND
FROM
CARACAS,
VIA MIAMI.

...WHO WAS
SEEN FLEEING
THE SCENE
JUST BEFORE
THE FIRE WAS
REPORTED.

ACCORDING
TO THE
PARATROOP
OFFICER WHO
BROUGHT
THIS TO MY
ATTENTION...

...THE MAIN
SUSPECT WAS
A WOMAN...

YOU'RE
CERTAIN HE
WAS...

...AN
ACTIVE
OFFICER?

...

ABSOLUTELY.

HE WAS A
ONE OF THE
MILITARY
ATTACHES.

THE
YOUNG
MASTER
IS VERY
CONCERNED...

WE
WOULD--

...ABOUT THE
HEAD MATRON'S
DISAPPEARANCE--
NO, ABOUT HER
ATTEMPT AT
REVENGE.

AS WE MENTIONED
EARLIER, OUR ONLY
WISH IS FOR THE
HEAD MATRON TO
RETURN TO THE
MANSION AS
QUICKLY AS
POSSIBLE.

THIS IS A
STRANGE LAND
FOR US. WE
CANNOT FIND
WHAT WE NEED
WITHOUT
ASSISTANCE.

...I
DON'T
LIKE
WHERE
THIS IS
HEADED,
KID.

AND
SO?

WHAT
DO YOU
NEED US
FOR?

NO,
ONLY THAT
JAPANESE
GENTLEMAN,
TO BE
PRECISE.

THE ONLY
PEOPLE HERE
WE CAN ASK
FOR HELP
ARE YOU.

NO...

WE UNDERSTAND
THIS REQUEST IS
DIFFERENT FROM
YOUR PRIMARY
BUSINESS.

THEREFORE
WE ARE
PREPARED
TO PAY
APPROPRIATE
COMPENSATION.
PLEASE--

PLEASE.

LEND US A
HAND IN THE
SEARCH FOR
OUR FAMILY'S
HEAD
MATRON.

MR.
CHANG.

I
UNDERSTAND
WHY
YOU'RE SO
CONCERNED.

...

I
SEE.

...WITH ENOUGH
TROUBLE IN IT
TO FILL UP ALL
THE SHELVES AT
SEARS.

THIS IS A
GREAT BIG
PANDORA'S
BOX...

BUT...

WHY...?

IT'S NOT
ABOUT THE
MONEY.

WE DON'T
WANT ANY
PART OF
THIS.



EXACTLY.

SHE'S UP
AGAINST THE
UNITED STATES'
UNCONVENTIONAL
WARFARE
FORCES.

WHY?
YOUR
HEAD
MATRON'S
...
...PLANNING
ON TAKING ON
EVERYBODY'S
FRIEND UNCLE
SAM WITH HER
BARE HANDS.

NO...

MAYBE
SOMETHING
EVEN MORE
THAN THAT.

IT'S
ABSOLUTELY
CRAZY. WHO'D
WANT ANY
PART OF THAT
MADNESS?

THAT IS
ALL THE
MORE
REASON...

KNOWING
THAT SHE'S
KILLING
PEOPLE...

...PAINS ME
AS MUCH
AS LOSING
MY FATHER.

...TO
STOP
HER.



SHE IS...
...FAMILY TO ME.

...WHO CAN SAVE HER IS ME.
...

AND THE ONLY PERSON IN THIS WORLD...



SHE SAID WE WOULD ALWAYS BE TOGETHER!

SHE...

SHE ALSO TOLD ME... SHE WOULD BE WITH ME FOREVER...



YOU CAME HALFWAY AROUND THE WORLD TO START BAWLING?

AW, CUT IT OUT.

WHAT'S UP WITH YOU?



GO AHEAD, TRY IT. IT MIGHT BE WORTH A SHOT.

FINE THEN, CRY ME A RIVER.

MAYBE A HERO WILL POP OUT OF A MARVEL COMIC.



...I'M
SORRY.

YOU ARE
RIGHT...



WHY
YOU...!



WE WILL
CONTINUE
OUR SEARCH
FOR HELP
ON OUR
OWN.

I THANK
YOU FOR
COMING.

IF YOU
ABSOLUTELY
WILL NOT
ACCEPT THE
TASK...

...WE
WILL NOT
INSIST ANY
FURTHER.

FABIOLA
...
IT'S
ALL
RIGHT.



...



...ALMOST
LIKE AN
ADULT.

YOU'VE...

...CHANGED
QUITE A BIT
SINCE THE
LAST TIME I
SAW YOU.
YOU'RE...



...ARE
ALL
GONE.

ALL THE
PEOPLE
I'VE COME
TO RELY
ON...

...

MY FATHER
PASSED AWAY
AND ROBERTA
DISAPPEARED.



...I'VE HAD
TO GROW UP
FASTER THAN
I SHOULD
HAVE.

THAT'S
ALL.

THAT
IS
WHY...



...I
SEE.



I DON'T THINK
LETTING
THESE TWO
KIDS RUN
AROUND IN A
TOWN LIKE
THIS IS A
SMART IDEA.

ROCK.

IS THAT
ALL YOU
HAVE TO
SAY?



...LEAVE THIS
MATTER TO US
AND RETURN TO
THEIR MANSION
IN VENEZUELA.

THIS
WHOLE
THING IS
BREAKING
MY HEART.

IF I HAD MY
WAY, I'D LOVE
TO SEE THEM...

HEH.

WAS
IT THAT
OBVIOUS,
DUTCH?

I KNOW YOU
DON'T THINK
THAT IN THE
SLIGHTEST.

YEAH
RIGHT, MR.
CHANG.



THAT
MAID IS
SOMETHING
ELSE.

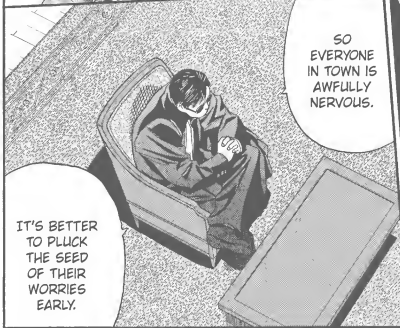


EVERYBODY
KNOWS FRY-FACE
MOBILIZED HER
COMMANDOS THE
LAST TIME SHE
WAS HERE.

WELL
...



THE
COLOMBIANS,
LIKE SENOR
GARCIA, ARE
AFTER THE
MAID.

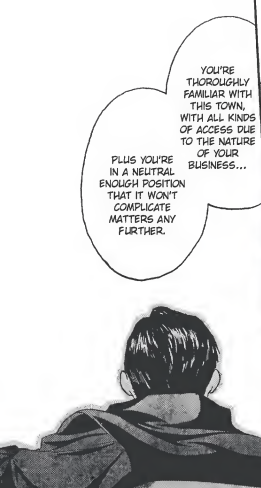


SO
EVERYONE
IN TOWN IS
AWFULLY
NERVOUS.

IT'S BETTER
TO PLUCK
THE SEED
OF THEIR
WORRIES
EARLY.

IT'S
OBVIOUS
THEY'LL
CLASH WITH
THIS LITTLE
BOY
SOONER
OR LATER.

THAT'S NOT
GOOD FOR
THIS TOWN
OR FOR US.



PLUS YOU'RE
IN A NEUTRAL
ENOUGH POSITION
THAT IT WON'T
COMPLICATE
MATTERS ANY
FURTHER.

YOU'RE
THOROUGHLY
FAMILIAR WITH
THIS TOWN,
WITH ALL KINDS
OF ACCESS DUE
TO THE NATURE
OF YOUR
BUSINESS...

C'MON
NOW,
DUTCH.
YOU
SHOULD
KNOW
BETTER.

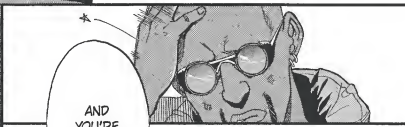
THIS
HASN'T GOT
ANYTHING TO
DO WITH US.
RUNNING
THIS TOWN
IS YOUR
CONCERN.

WE'RE TOO
BIG TO MOVE
AROUND
LIKE THAT.

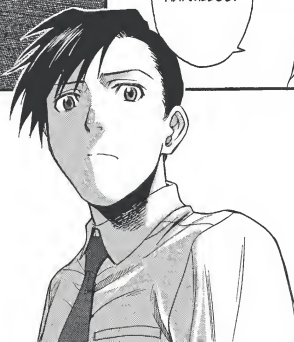
BUT

...

WHY DON'T
YOU TWO
PARTNER UP?
THAT'LL MAKE
THINGS
EASIER.



AND
YOU'RE
HARMLESS.



BRINGING YOU
IN TO HELP IS
JUST WHAT WE
NEEDED. ISN'T
THAT RIGHT...

...ROCK?



I CAN'T
FORCE YOU.
IT'S ALL...

...UP TO
YOU.

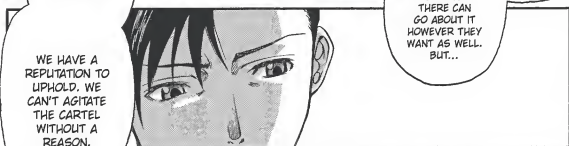
OF
COURSE...



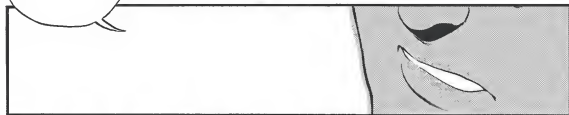
IF A
PROBLEM
DOES OCCUR,
WE CAN'T HAVE
ANYTHING TO
DO WITH IT.

IF YOU SAY
YOU WON'T DO IT,
WE'LL SEARCH
FOR HER IN OUR
OWN WAY.

AND OF
COURSE THOSE
TWO OVER
THERE CAN
GO ABOUT IT
HOWEVER THEY
WANT AS WELL.
BUT...



WE HAVE A
REPUTATION TO
UPHOLD. WE
CAN'T AGITATE
THE CARTEL
WITHOUT A
REASON.



GARCIA
WANTS HER
BACK AS
SOON AS
POSSIBLE.

THIS TOWN
WANTS THE
MAID OUT OF
HERE AS
SOON AS
POSSIBLE.



IF WE CAN
CATCH UP TO
HER BEFORE
SHE REACHES
THOSE
SOLDIERS...

WE'LL HAVE
EVERYTHING
WRAPPED UP
NICE AND
NEAT.

ISN'T THAT
RIGHT, MR.
CHANG?



THE
SOLDIERS
ARE STILL
ON THE
SHELF.

THERE'S
STILL ONE
LOOSE END,
ROCK.



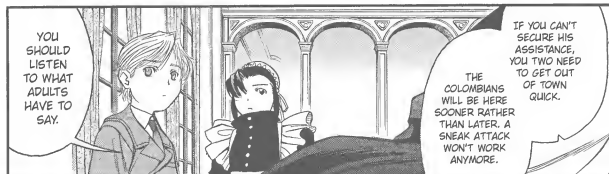
SHE'S AS
CROSS-EYED
AS THE ROAD
RUNNER ON
SPEED.

YOU COME
ACROSS HER
LOOKIN' STUPID
AND SHE'LL
SHOOT YOU FULL
OF HOLES
BEFORE YOU CAN
EVEN OPEN YOUR
MOUTH.

DUTCH IS
RIGHT. YOU
WANNA DIVE
HEAD FIRST
INTO A PILE
OF SHIT?

UH...
HOLD ON A
SECOND,
GUYS.

YOU REALLY
THINK YOU
CAN TAKE
ON FOUR
EYES WITH
A SMILE
ON YOUR
FACE?





WELL
THEN,
YOUNG
MASTER.

LET ME
KNOW WHEN
YOU MAKE
UP YOUR
MIND.



GREAT
BROTHER
CHANG.

WILL
HE DO
IT?

OH
YEAH.
THAT'S
THE KIND
OF GUY
HE IS.

BIU.

CARING.
COMPASSIONATE.
PRETTY RARE IN
THIS TOWN...

IN
ANY
CASE...

OUR
GHOSTS
FINALLY
HAVE A
NAME.

ALL WE
HAVE TO
DO IS PLAY
OUR PART.

FIRST
WE DO
A LITTLE
INVESTIGATING
OF THE YOUNG
MASTER'S NEW
SAFEHOUSE.

...NO,
THAT'S...

WHO DO
WE...

...CONTACT
?

...NOT
HIM...

WE HAVE TO
MOVE THE
PIECES ON
THE BOARD
CAREFULLY.

THOSE
GHOSTS
ARE SKILLED
SOLDIERS.

THE SMART
THING TO DO
IS SEND
SOLDIERS
OUT AGAINST
SOLDIERS.

WE'LL
KEEP IT AS
SOMETHING TO
DO BETWEEN
JOBS.

IT'S THE
SAME AS
FINDING A
MISSING
CAT.

VR M M M



...IT WOULDN'T
BE A PROBLEM...
IF THIS WERE
A CAT.

MAYBE.

THIS IS
MORE
LIKE...
...A
SIBERIAN
TIGER.

POFF

...THAT'S
NOT...

HE MEANS
THE SECOND
YOU OPEN THE
CLOSET...

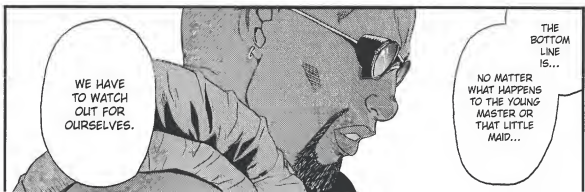
...WHAT
DUTCH IS
TRYING TO
SAY.

IT'S WHAT
HAPPENS
AFTER YOU
STICK YOUR
NECK OUT TO
FIND THE
CAT.

KING

YOU HAVEN'T
FORGOTTEN
ABOUT THE
MATTER OF
THE TROOPS,
HAVE YOU?

YOU MIGHT
GET BITTEN
CLEAN IN
HALF.



VM

MM

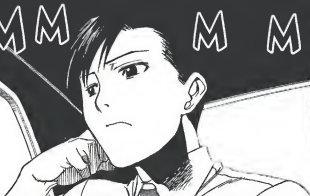
M

M

...I WANT
YOU OFF
MY BOAT
FOR GOOD.

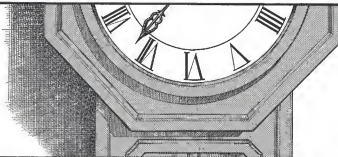
THAT'S ALL I
HAVE TO SAY.
THE REST IS
UP TO YOU.

IF
YOU CAN'T
UNDERSTAND
THAT...



FABIOLA.

HAS
MR. ROCK...



YOU
SHOULDN'T
BE SO
TRUSTING,
YOUNG
MASTER.

JUST LIKE IN
THE BARRIO.
PEOPLE LIKE
THEM ARE
ALL LYING
CONWARDS.

SHP

IT'S
JUST A
WASTE OF
TIME
EVEN TO
HOPE
FOR IT.

I'M GLAD
YOU'VE
COME TO
YOUR
SENSES.

YOU'RE
RIGHT.

BUT WE CAN'T
BE SITTING
HERE DOING
NOTHING...

I WILL MAKE
ANOTHER TRIP
THROUGH TOWN.
PERHAPS I WILL
FIND A CLUE THAT
WILL LEAD US
TO THE HEAD
MATRON.

SO-

CHK

SHALL I
ASK THE
FRONT
DESK?

IT'LL
BE THE
FOURTH
TIME SINCE
SUNRISE?



I
SEE...



I WAS
GOING TO CALL
BUT...

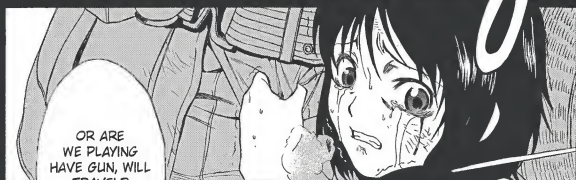


...IT'S
ALMOST
NOON AND I
THOUGHT IT'D
BE QUICKER
IF I JUST
CAME OVER.



SO,
HERE WE
ARE!

...IS
SOMETHING
WRONG?



W
H
C'MON,
LARKIN.

YOU'RE
NOT LAYING
A FINGER
ON HER.

YOU'RE A
BIG BOY,
AREN'T
YOU?

KACHIK

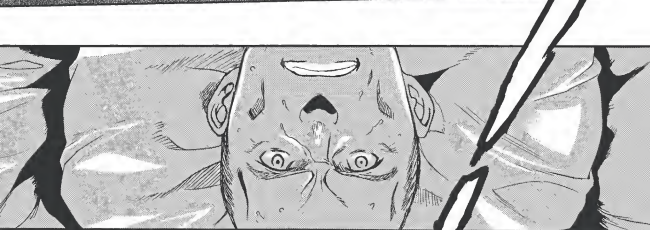
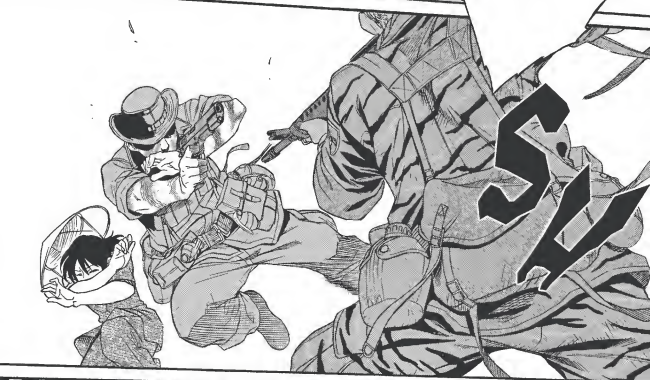
LARKIN.

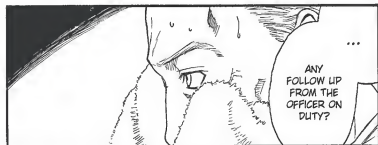
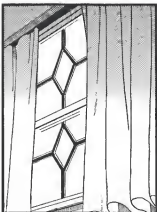
I GET
IT NOW.
YOU'RE...

...USING
WAR AS AN
EXCUSE TO
REVEL IN YOUR
CRIMES.

YOU'RE
BENEATH
CONTEMPT,
NOTHING BUT
A PETTY
LITTLE THUG.

Chapter 52:
El Baile de la Muerte - Part IX



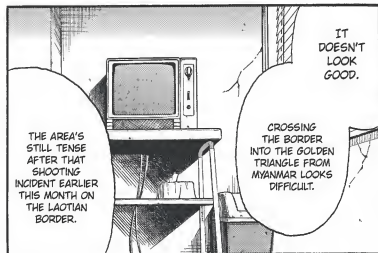


ANY
FOLLOW UP
FROM THE
OFFICER ON
DUTY?



GOOD
MORNING,
MAJOR.

COFFEE?



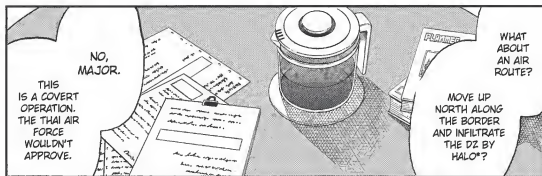
IT
DOESN'T
LOOK
GOOD.

THE AREA'S
STILL TENSE
AFTER THAT
SHOOTING
INCIDENT EARLIER
THIS MONTH ON
THE LAOTIAN
BORDER.

CROSSING
THE BORDER
INTO THE GOLDEN
TRIANGLE FROM
MYANMAR LOOKS
DIFFICULT.



YES,
PLEASE.



THIS IS A COVERT OPERATION. THE THAI AIR FORCE WOULDN'T APPROVE.

NO, MAJOR.

WHAT ABOUT AN AIR ROUTE?

MOVE UP NORTH ALONG THE BORDER AND INFILTRATE THE DZ BY HALO*?



ANY MORE DELAYS MEANS WE'LL HAVE TO ABORT.

WE'RE STRAYING FURTHER AND FURTHER AWAY FROM OUR INITIAL OPERATION PLAN.

THIS IS TOO UNPREDICTABLE. WE HAVE LESS THAN A WEEK.



SO WE CAN'T MOVE UNTIL THE SITUATION AT THE BORDER STABILIZES?

THAT'S WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE.



SHIT!

WE'RE IN A SITUATION WHERE SUCCESS CAN'T BE GUARANTEED. WHAT ARE THEY IN SUCH A HURRY FOR?

HE SAYS THEY'RE "ON STANDBY UNLESS OTHERWISE DIRECTED."



I JUST PRAY THIS DOESN'T TURN INTO ANOTHER OPERATION EAGLE CLAW.

GIVE ME A BREAK.

WE'RE STEPPING INTO WHAT USED TO BE THE CIA'S TERRITORY.

IT'S POLITICS, MAJOR. I KNOW...IT'S RIDICULOUS.



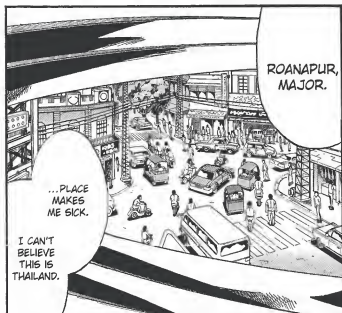
1ST ASSAULT TROOP, TEAM BRAVO.

A SURVIVOR OF DESERT ONE.

IRAN HUH? I WAS ON STANDBY BACK THEN.

YOU WERE-

*HALO: HIGH ALTITUDE LOW OPENING-A DIFFICULT AND DANGEROUS PARACHUTING TECHNIQUE



IT'S
REPULSIVE
...

...
SICKENING.

IT HAS
THE SAME
STENCH AS
SAIGON IN
1969.

THE ONLY
THING THAT'S
DIFFERENT IS
THE LANGUAGE
AND THERE ARE
NO COPS
DIRECTING
TRAFFIC.

WHY HAVE
YOU BEEN
STARING AT
ME?

WHAT
DID I
DO?

I GUESS I
DIDN'T GIVE
YOU A CLEAR
ANSWER
YESTERDAY,
DID I?

DID I
WORRY
YOU?

...
NOTHING.

I JUST
DIDN'T
EXPECT YOU
TO COME.



...I
DUNNO.

I
JUST
THOUGHT
...

"IT
MIGHT
BE FUN."

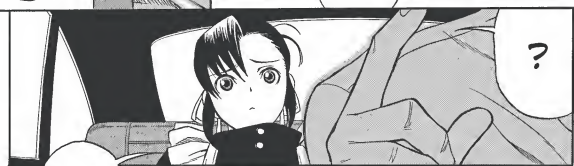


I DIDN'T
EXPECT
ANYONE
LIVING HERE
TO AGREE
TO OUR
REQUEST.

...WITH
ALL DUE
RESPECT.

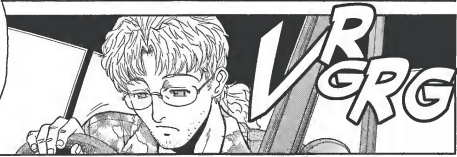
BUT...

WHY
EXACTLY
ARE YOU
HERE?



?

ANYWAY...



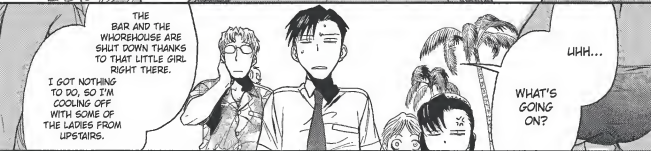
LET'S START
AT BAO'S. IT'S
THE FIRST PLACE
ROBERTA WAS
SIGHTED IN
ROANAPUR.

V R GRG



THERE'S
NOTHING
LEFT TO
BREAK.

THE
HELL'RE
YOU DOING
HERE?



THE
BAR AND THE
WHOREHOUSE ARE
SHUT DOWN THANKS
TO THAT LITTLE GIRL
RIGHT THERE.

I GOT NOTHING
TO DO, SO I'M
COOLING OFF
WITH SOME OF
THE LADIES FROM
UPSTAIRS.

UHH...

WHAT'S
GOING
ON?



IT
WAS LIKE...
COLLATERAL
DAMAGE...

UH, HOW
SHOULD I
PUT IT...?

UM...



FABIOLA?

DID
YOU-

AH?!

NO NO
NO NO!
IT WASN'T
INTENTIONAL!



THE WAY
THE FRONT OF
THE BAR IS
DESTROYED
DOESN'T LOOK
LIKE SIMPLE
COLLATERAL
DAMAGE.

I ASKED YOU
TO BE AS
DISCREET AS
POSSIBLE...

OH MY,
OH MY!

GUESTS
?



OH, IS THAT RIGHT?

ALL RIGHT, FLORA. UMM...

I'LL STOP BY SOMETIME, BUT I NEED TO SPEAK TO BAO-

UH, MADAME?

OH, PLEASE, CALL ME FLORA.

SO?

WHAT IS IT?

SORRY ABOUT THAT. SHE JUST LOVES TO TALK.

THAT'S TOO BAD, BUT I'LL LET YOU GO.

PLEASE DO COME BY. YOU'LL HAVE A MUCH BETTER TIME WITH US THAN OVER AT THAT BASTARD ROWAN'S PLACE.

ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED THE OTHER DAY...

BAO.

WE'RE LOOKING FOR LEADS TO THE MAID.

OKAY, THANK YOU.

BAO.

YOU WERE THE FIRST PERSON IN ROANAPUR TO SEE THE MAID AND YOU SERVED HER, RIGHT?

SPLASH

I DON'T WANT ANY MORE TROUBLE.



FUCK OFF,
ASSHOLE.

I
WON'T HOLD
ANYTHING
BACK FROM
YOU, AND
YOU DO THE
SAME FOR
ME. CALL IT
BARTER.

PLUS
THIS IS A
PERSONAL
REQUEST
FROM THE
TRIAD'S MR.
CHANG.



PLEASE,
BAO.

OR...?

IS
THERE A
REASON
YOU CAN'T
SAY
ANYTHING?



I DON'T
FUCKIN'
REMEMBER.

BESIDES,
I GOT NO
REASON TO
TALK ABOUT
THAT WITH
YOU.



BUT
UNDER ONE
CONDITION.

IF ANYTHING
GOES WRONG
WITH THIS, YOU
GOTTA PROMISE
TO KEEP ME
OUT OF IT.

...

I
ALREADY
TOLD BIU,
BUT...ALL
RIGHT.



I WANT
THAT IN
WRITING. MY
ASS IS ON
THE LINE
HERE.

FINE.

OF
COURSE.

SO,
WHEN
SHE
CAME
IN...



Agave
SANTITAS
PREMIER
FAM. RESERVA

K
L
A

T
E
R

ARE YOU
INSANE?

THIS AIN'T
THE DARRA
ARMS MARKET.
NOBODY'LL
SELL YOU A
GUN WITHOUT
THE RIGHT
INTRODUCTION.

ALL THE
PLACES I
NEED TO
VISIT TO
START A
WAR.

I SAID,
PLEASE
TELL ME...

WHAT
DID
YOU...

SKRK

...JUST
SAY?

...WELL.

YOU CAN
PROVIDE
ME WITH AN
INTRO-
DUCTION.

YOU
GOTTA BE
KIDDING.

THERE'S
NO WAY IN
HELL-

!

AK

KRNGH

KRNGH

KRSHH

KRSHH

PERHAPS
YOU
THINK...

...THIS IS
A JOKE
OR A
WHIM?



DOC
HEARTLAND,
THE UNDER-
GROUND
DOCTOR...
THAT WAS FOR
THOSE PILLS.

I CALLED
PRAINYCHAT,
TOH CHI...



WHILE I WAS
MAKING CALLS
FOR HER
INTRODUCTION...

...SHE WAS
CHOMPING ON
PILLS THE WHOLE
TIME. LIKE THEY
WERE DORITOS.

...I
SEE.

THANKS A LOT.
I'LL RETURN
THE FAVOR
SOON.



YEAH,
PROBABLY.

BUT
I DIDN'T ASK
FOR SPECIFICS.
NOT THAT I'D
WANNA KNOW.

WHERE'S
TWO HAND?

WHAT? YOU
GUYS HAVE
A FIGHT?



I JUST
REALIZED
SOMETHING.



OH...

HEY!

SHE...

OH.
YOU
MEAN
REVVY?

THIS
SUCKS.

SHUT
THE
FUCK
UP.

YOUR
"TELL" IS
SO EASY
TO READ.

WHENEVER
YOU START
RAISING LIKE
CRAZY, YOU
USUALLY GOT
JACK SHIT.

FULL-
BOAT,
BABY.

THAT MEANS
I'VE MADE
230 BUCKS
TODAY.

WHY DIDN'T
YOU GO
WITH ROCK,
TWO HAND?

HEHE.

"FOR GOD
LOVES A
CHEERFUL
GIVER."

REALLY? I
WAS UNDER THE
IMPRESSION...

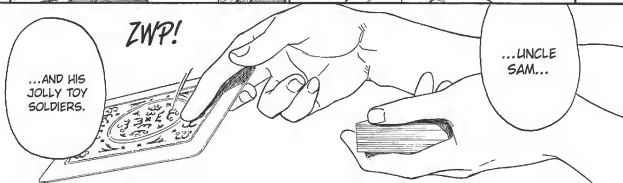
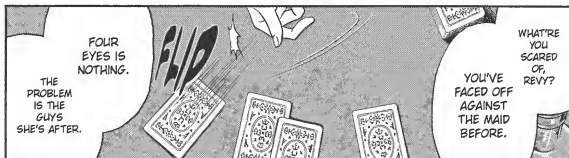
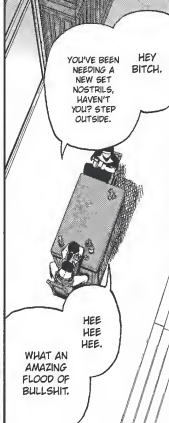
...IT WAS YOUR JOB
TO STICK TO HIS ASS
LIKE A DINGLEBERRY
WHEREVER HE GOES.

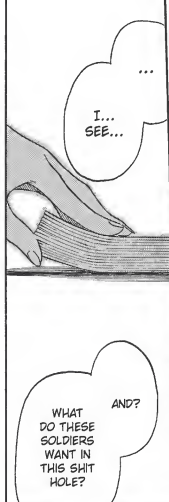
WHY
SHOULD
I?

HE'S
WAY TOO
SYMPATHETIC.

AWW.

FUCK
YOU.





I...
SEE...

...



THE
MAID'S
PISSED
OFF AS
HELL.

YEAH,
THAT'S
RIGHT.

SHE'S
PLANNING
ON MAKING
GRADE A
HAMBURGER
OUT OF 'EM.

THAT'S
WHAT'S
UP.

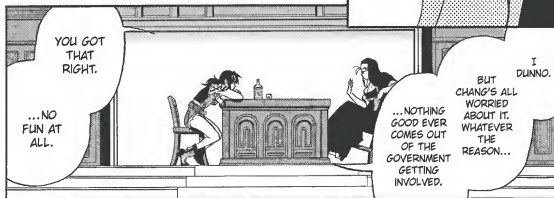
AND?

WHAT
DO THESE
SOLDIERS
WANT IN
THIS SHIT
HOLE?



...THE
UNITED
STATES
...

...
MILITARY?



YOU GOT
THAT
RIGHT.

...NO
FUN AT
ALL.

...NOTHING
GOOD EVER
COMES OUT
OF THE
GOVERNMENT
GETTING
INVOLVED.

I
DUNNO.
BUT
CHANG'S ALL
WORRIED
ABOUT IT.
WHATEVER
THE
REASON...

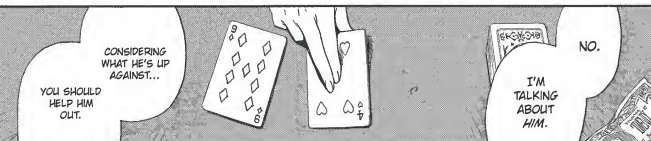


YOU AREN'T
FOLDING ON
ME, ARE
YOU, EDA?!

WHAT?

HEY,
REVVY...

...

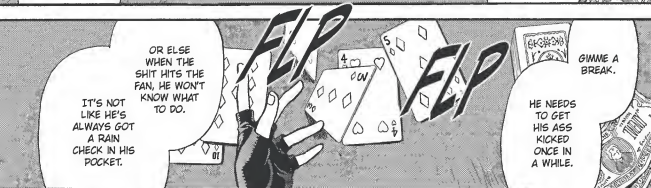


YOU SHOULD
HELP HIM
OUT.

CONSIDERING
WHAT HE'S UP
AGAINST...

NO.

I'M
TALKING
ABOUT
HIM.

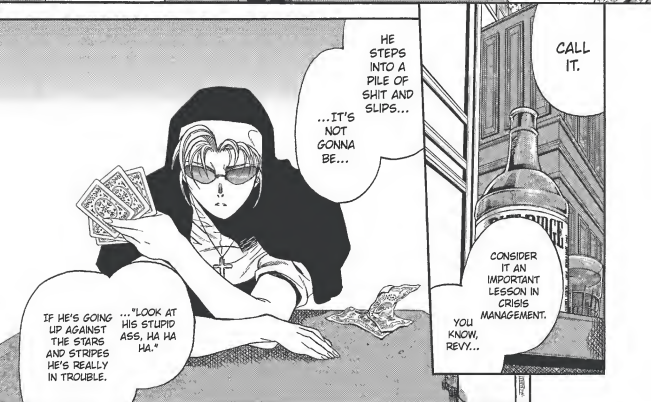


IT'S NOT
LIKE HE'S
ALWAYS GOT
A RAIN
CHECK IN HIS
POCKET.

OR ELSE
WHEN THE
SHIT HITS THE
FAN, HE WON'T
KNOW WHAT
TO DO.

GIMME A
BREAK.

HE NEEDS
TO GET
HIS ASS
KICKED
ONCE IN
A WHILE.



HE
STEPS
INTO A
PILE OF
SHIT AND
SLIPS...

...IT'S
NOT
GONNA
BE...

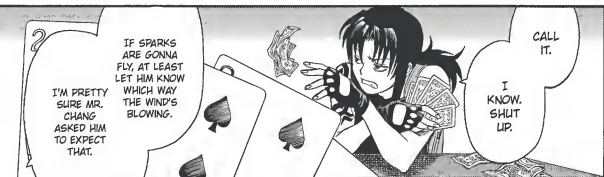
CALL
IT.

IF HE'S GOING
UP AGAINST
THE STARS
AND STRIPES
HE'S REALLY
IN TROUBLE.

..."LOOK AT
HIS STUPID
ASS, HA HA
HA."

CONSIDER
IT AN
IMPORTANT
LESSON IN
CRISIS
MANAGEMENT.

YOU
KNOW,
REVV...

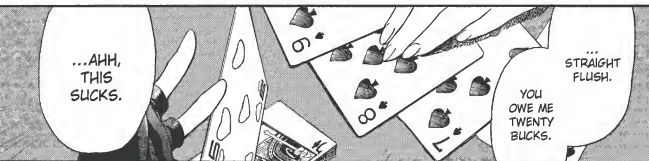
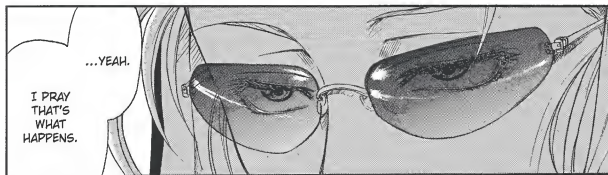


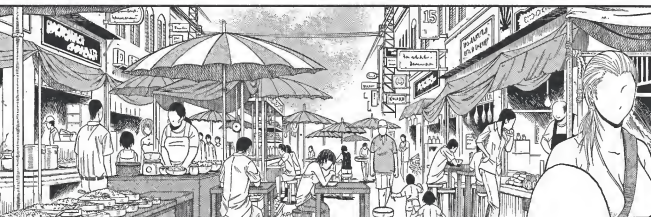
I'M PRETTY
SURE MR.
CHANG
ASKED HIM
TO EXPECT
THAT.

IF SPARKS
ARE GONNA
FLY, AT LEAST
LET HIM KNOW
WHICH WAY
THE WIND'S
BLOWING.

CALL
IT.

I
KNOW.
SHUT
UP.





...WHAT'S
WRONG?

YOU LOOK
LIKE YOU'RE
IN A BAD
MOOD.

YOU WON'T
BE ABLE
TO ENJOY
YOUR MEAL
LIKE THAT.

C
H
E
W
C
H
E
W

KUAK

KIK
KIK
KIK



KTNK

WE'VE BEEN
WALKING
AROUND ALL
DAY...

...AND
ALL THREE
PLACES WE
WERE TOLD
ABOUT
PRETENDED
TO BE CLOSED.

NOW
WHY IS
THAT?



SEÑOR
ROCK.

MAY I
SAY ONE
THING?

S
L
U
R
P

...SURE.

WHAT
IS IT?



WHAT DID YOU EXPECT? WE SHOW UP WITH A LITTLE GIRL DRESSED LIKE A MAID...

DON'T GET SO UPSET.

THAT'S BECAUSE ...

UM...



...AND A WELL-BRED BOY THEY'VE NEVER SEEN BEFORE...

WHO'D WANNA GET INVOLVED WITH SUCH SUSPICIOUS CHARACTERS? THIS JUST ISN'T GONNA WORK...

...WITHOUT SOMEBODY LIKE DUTCH OR REVV ALONG WITH US.



THIS IS NOT WHAT YOU PROMISED US!

NOT AT ALL!!



YOU DIDN'T ASK.

... I WISH YOU'D TOLD ME THAT SOONER.



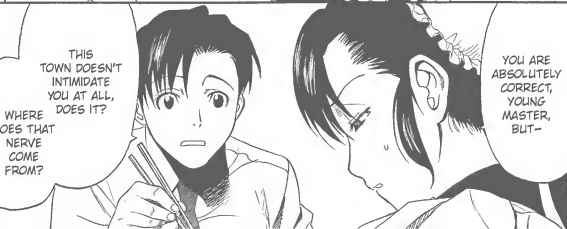
YOU SAW HOW THINGS WENT WITH MR. ROCK.

IT'S UNFORTUNATE, BUT WE CAN'T DO THIS ON OUR OWN.

...FABIOLA.

ANYWAY.

WE CANNOT AFFORD TO STRIKE OUT LIKE THIS. I'LL CONTINUE THE SEARCH ON MY OWN IF I HAVE TO-



THIS TOWN DOESN'T INTIMIDATE YOU AT ALL, DOES IT?

WHERE DOES THAT NERVE COME FROM?

YOU ARE ABSOLUTELY CORRECT, YOUNG MASTER, BUT-



IT'S A
NICKNAME.

BARRIO?

IT'S AN
IMPOVERISHED
AREA IN THE
SUBURBS OF
CARACAS.



SHE'S...

FROM
THE
BARRIO.



...MY HOME IS
THE SAME.
IT'S FULL OF
IDIOTS AND
SCUM.
I AM USED TO
THIS KIND OF
TREATMENT.

MUNCH
MUNCH!



...WE DECIDED
TO INCREASE
THE HELP. THAT
IS HOW SHE
JOINED MY
FAMILY.

THE MINE
IS FINALLY
BECOMING
FINANCIALLY
STABLE,
SO...

A FARMER
WHO WORKS
ON OUR
PLANTATION...

...IS A
DISTANT
RELATIVE
OF HERS.



I WOULDN'T
HAVE BEEN
ABLE TO GO
TO SCHOOL OR
FIND A JOB IF I
HAD STAYED IN
THE BARRIO.

SO IF
I WENT
TO WORK,
THERE'D BE
LESS BURDEN
ON MY
FAMILY.

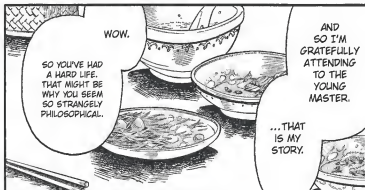
WELL...

NOT ONLY IS
MY FAMILY
DIRT POOR,
THERE'RE 11
OF US.



SO
IS THE
BARRIO
WHERE
YOU
LEARNED...

...THOSE
FANCY KICKS
AND HOW TO
HANDLE A
GUN?



WOW.

SO YOU'VE HAD
A HARD LIFE.
THAT MIGHT BE
WHY YOU SEEM
SO STRANGELY
PHILOSOPHICAL.

AND
SO I'M
GRATEFULLY
ATTENDING
TO THE
YOUNG
MASTER.

...THAT
IS MY
STORY.



HEY
FABIOLA.

WHAT'S
THIS
ABOUT
"FANCY
KICKS"?



...UH,
YOUNG
MASTER.

EVERYBODY
SEEMS TO BE
FINISHED WITH
THEIR MEALS,
SO-

THERE YOU
GO AGAIN
SAYING
THINGS YOU
SHOULDN'T!

"FANCY
KICKS"?



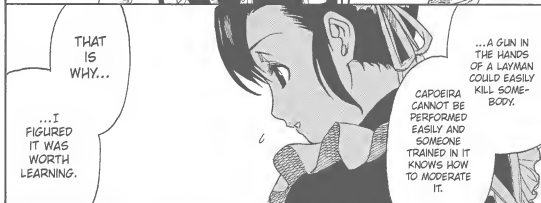
...!



AN ELDERLY
MAN WAS
ATTENDING
A NEARBY
SCHOOL.

I
PICKED
IT UP
WATCHING
HIM.

IT'S
CAPOEIRA,
YOUNG
MASTER.





NOW...
IT'S NOT
LIKE ME TO
DOLE OUT
ADVICE.

I
SEE.

I TOTALLY
ADMIRE YOUR
PRINCIPLES,
BUT...

...ACTUALLY
APPLYING
THEM HERE IN
THIS TOWN IS
A DIFFERENT
STORY.

BUT IF
SOMETHING
GOES DOWN
THAT YOU CAN'T
SETTLE THAT
WAY, DON'T
HESITATE TO
PULL THE
TRIGGER.

THIS
TOWN ISN'T
GENEROUS
ENOUGH TO
ALLOW YOU
TO TEST
YOURSELF.



I DON'T
WANT THAT
TO HAPPEN
TO FABIOLA
AND ME.

ROBERTA
COULDN'T
RESIST.

BUT...

ACTING ON
INSTINCT
LIKE THAT
ALLOWS FOR
BRUTALITY.
THAT'S A
BAD THING.



IT'S
EASY TO
MOCK YOUR
UNREALISTIC
VIEWS,
BUT...

THAT'S
NOT IT.
I'VE TOLD
YOU THIS
BEFORE.

IN TERMS
OF RIGHT
OR WRONG,
THIS TOWN
IS ALL
WRONG.



LET'S HEAD
BACK AFTER
WE DROP
THEM OFF AT
MR. CHANG'S
BOATHOUSE.

IS THAT
ALL RIGHT
WITH YOU,
ROCK?

UH...

SURE.



I'M JUST
SAYING THAT
IF THERE'S A
GOAL YOU NEED
TO ACHIEVE,
DEAL WITH IT
APPROPRIATELY.

OKAY.

DUTCH'LL
BE MAD
IF WE'RE
LATE.

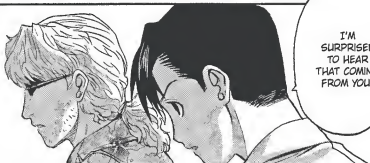


...BENNY.

IT JUST
DOESN'T
FEEL SO
GREAT WHEN
CHILDREN DIE.

OH
YEAH?

I'M
SURPRISED
TO HEAR
THAT COMING
FROM YOU.



HOW MUCH
DO YOU HAVE
TO STEEL YOUR
SOUL TO GET
OVER A
STRANGER'S
DEATH?

...THAT'S WHY
I DON'T INTEND
TO TEST
MYSELF IN THIS
TOWN EITHER.

CHNK

AND...

THIS IS
THE MOST
WE CAN DO
FOR THEM,
IN A WAY.

KCHN



OR GET
TOO DEEPLY
INVOLVED
LIKE YOU,
ROCK.



...I HAVE
YET TO
THOROUGHLY
GRASP THE
SITUATION,
BUT...

I
ASSUME
...

...HE HAS
OBTAINED
SOME
DISTURBING
INFOR-
MATION...

...PERTAINING
TO THE MAID
THAT MUST BE
ACTED UPON.

AN
EXPANDED
GATHERING
INCLUDING
REPS FROM
ALL THE
AFFILIATES
NO LESS?

...A
NETWORK
MEETING?

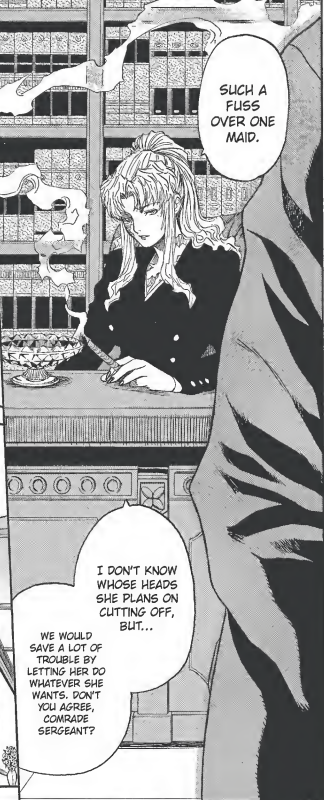
AT THIS
TIME OF
YEAR?

RIDICULOUS.
WHAT IS
CHANG
THINKING?



HER TARGET
IS NOT
SOMEONE
WHO LIVES
HERE.

HER EMPLOYER
WAS KILLED IN
A TERRORIST
BOMB ATTACK.
I BELIEVE SHE
CAME HERE FOR
REVENGE.



SUCH A
FUSS
OVER ONE
MAID.



HOW
CERTAIN
OF THAT
ARE YOU?

THE HEAD OF THE
LOVELACE FAMILY
DIED IN A TERRORIST
BOMB ATTACK AT
A POLITICAL PARTY
CEREMONY IN
BARINAS, VENEZUELA
ON SEPTEMBER 12
OF THIS YEAR.

THAT IS
INFORMATION
THAT CAN BE
TRUSTED,
CAPTAIN.

I DON'T KNOW
WHOSE HEADS
SHE PLANS ON
CUTTING OFF,
BUT...

WE WOULD
SAVE A LOT OF
TROUBLE BY
LETTING HER DO
WHATEVER SHE
WANTS. DON'T
YOU AGREE,
COMRADE
SERGEANT?

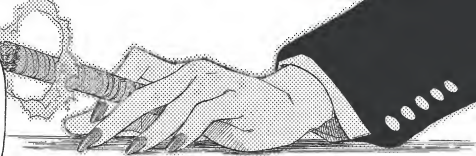
...YES, I
DO SEE...

SERGEANT.

THE DAY
BEFORE
MIDNIGHT
BY STEPHEN HUNTER

...
TERRORIST
...

...
BOMBING
...



I WANT
YOUR
OPINION.

WHAT'S YOUR
INTERPRETATION
OF THE POSSIBLE
SCENARIOS
INVOLVED HERE?



THERE IS A
STRONG
POSSIBILITY IT
WAS A COVERT
OPERATION BY A
THIRD PARTY
POLITICAL
ORGANIZATION.

IN MY
PERSONAL
OPINION...

LOCAL ARMED
GROUPS HAD
NO MOTIVE.
GOVERNMENTAL
AGENCIES
WOULD NOT
HAVE
CONCEALED
THEM HERE.

IF THE
SCENARIO
YOU ENVISION
IS IN FACT
TRUE...

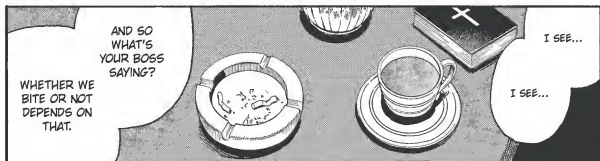
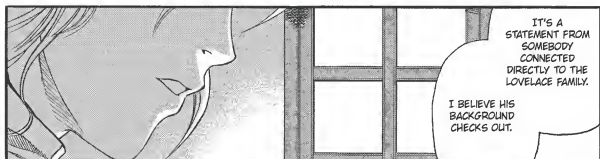
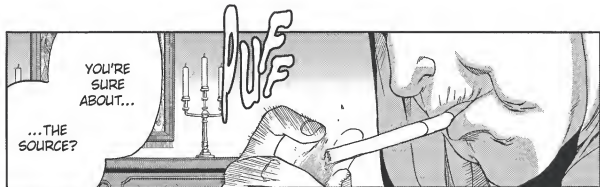
THE
INSTRUCTORS
AT THE RYAZAN
AIRBORNE
ACADEMY WOULD
BE PROUD.

WELL
DONE,
SERGEANT.

THIS
SHOULD BE
FUN, EH,
SERGEANT?

...THAT'S
A GOOD
ENOUGH
REASON FOR
CHANG TO BE
FRIGHTENED.

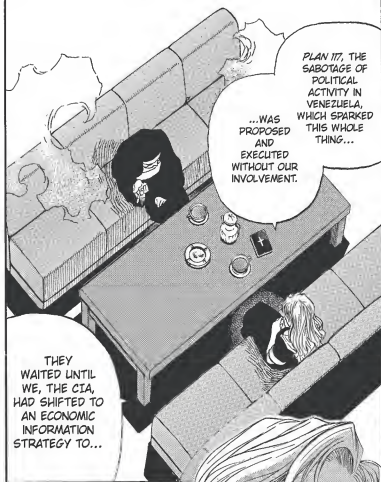
VERY
INTERESTING.



Chapter 53:

El Baile de la Muerte - Part X





...WAS
PROPOSED
AND
EXECUTED
WITHOUT OUR
INVOLVEMENT.

PLAN 117, THE
SABOTAGE OF
POLITICAL
ACTIVITY IN
VENEZUELA,
WHICH SPARKED
THIS WHOLE
THING...

THEY
WAITED UNTIL
WE, THE CIA,
HAD SHIFTED TO
AN ECONOMIC
INFORMATION
STRATEGY TO...



HMPH.

SO IT'S A
TURF WAR
BETWEEN THE
NSA AND THE
CIA.

THE BIGGER
YOU ARE,
THE MORE
PROBLEMS
YOU HAVE.



...MAKES
ME SICK.

...EXPAND
THEIR
INFLUENCE
IN THE FIELD
OF COVERT
OPERATIONS.

JUST
THINKING
ABOUT
IT...



OF
COURSE
NOT.

YOU CAN
CONSIDER THAT
OUR COLLECTIVE
OPINION.

HMPH.

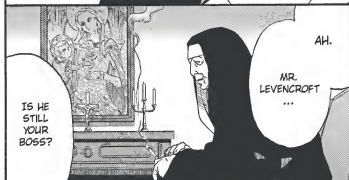
YOU DON'T
MINCE YOUR
WORDS, DO
YOU, EDA?



MY SUPERIOR
WILL CONTACT
YOU SHORTLY
REGARDING
YOUR FEES.

THANK YOU,
SISTER
YOLANDA.

MY POSITION
HERE AT THE
CHURCH
ALLOWS ME TO
WORK WITH
EASE.



IS HE
STILL
YOUR
BOSS?

AH.

MR.
LEVENCROFT
...

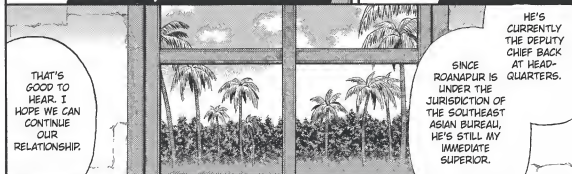


OH
WELL.

I'LL KEEP AN
EYE OUT FOR
ANY INFO
REGARDING THE
NSA CHIEF HERE
IN THE CITY.

THE CIA'S
SOMETHING
OF A
REGULAR
CUSTOMER.

IT'D BE GREAT
FOR US IF WE
CAN CONTINUE
SHARING
INFORMATION.



THAT'S
GOOD TO
HEAR. I
HOPE WE CAN
CONTINUE
OUR
RELATIONSHIP.

HE'S
CURRENTLY
THE DEPUTY
CHIEF BACK
AT HEAD-
QUARTERS.

SINCE
ROANAPUR IS
UNDER THE
JURISDICTION
OF THE
SOUTHEAST
ASIAN BUREAU,
HE'S STILL MY
IMMEDIATE
SUPERIOR.



A RECORDING
OR COPY OF
THE MINUTES
SHOULD DO.

I WOULD
LIKE THAT.

I'LL TAKE
CARE OF IT
SO THERE
WON'T BE
ANY LEAKS.



LET'S
GET BACK
TO THE
SUBJECT.

THE TRIAD'S
TAKING THE
LEAD IN THIS
MATTER.

THEY'RE
PROBABLY
HOLDING A
MEETING AT
THE GOLDEN
SWINGIN
NIGHT CLUB
ABOUT NOW.
DO YOU WANT
A LIST
OF WHO'S
ATTENDING?



THEY'LL
SNEAK UP
ON YOU AND
SHOOT YOU
IN THE BACK,
SAME AS
YOU WOULD.

BE
CAREFUL.

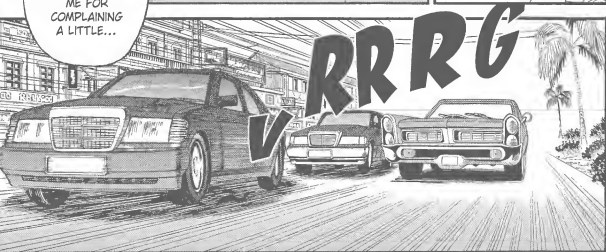
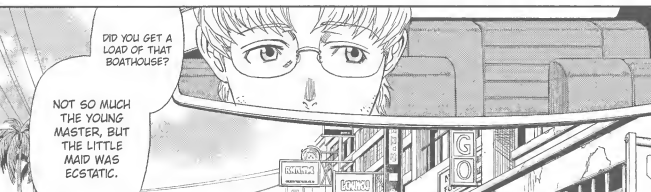
YOU'RE UP
AGAINST
PEOPLE WHO
KNOW THE
TERRITORY.

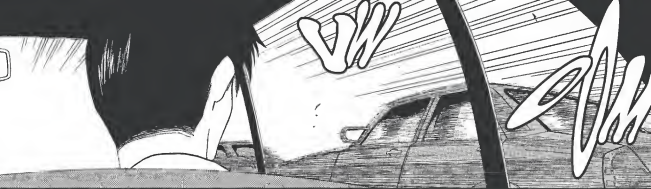
SOME
ADVICE
FROM AN
OLD LADY.

REMEMBER
THAT, EDA.

YEAH.

SISTER.





HAVEN'T
YOU
HEARD?

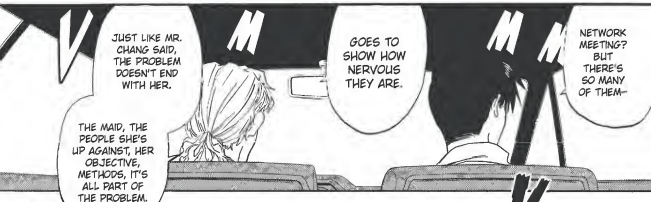
TO THE
NETWORK
MEETING...

...ABOUT
THAT THING
WE'RE ALSO
INVOLVED
WITH.



...THAT
THE MAFIA?

WHERE ARE
THEY ALL
GOING?

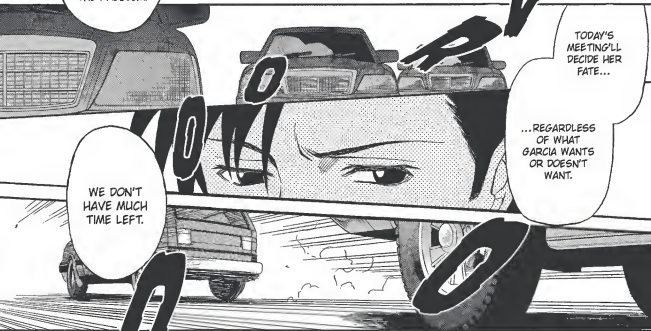


JUST LIKE MR.
CHANG SAID,
THE PROBLEM
DOESN'T END
WITH HER.

THE MAID, THE
PEOPLE SHE'S
UP AGAINST, HER
OBJECTIVE,
METHODS, IT'S
ALL PART OF
THE PROBLEM.

GOES TO
SHOW HOW
NERVOUS
THEY ARE.

NETWORK
MEETING?
BUT
THERE'S
SO MANY
OF THEM—



TODAY'S
MEETING'LL
DECIDE HER
FATE...

...REGARDLESS
OF WHAT
GARCIA WANTS
OR DOESN'T
WANT.

WE DON'T
HAVE MUCH
TIME LEFT.

VR
"YOU GOTTA
DISTINGUISH
THE DIVIDE."

YOU
HEARD
WHAT
DUTCH
SAID?

IT'S THE
SMART
WAY TO
PLAY IT.
THE RIGHT
WAY.

FLX

I HATE TO
SAY THIS,
ROCK.

BUT THE
WATER'S
FLOWING...

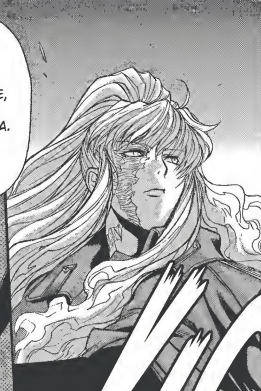
...AROUND OUR
FEET. THE YOUNG
MASTER'S TOO.
THAT'S THE
SITUATION.

...YEAH.

THE DIVIDE
IS FARTHER
DOWN.

AND YOU CAN
ONLY SEE IT AT
THE MOMENT OF
IMPACT.

THAT'S
RIGHT.
BUT...



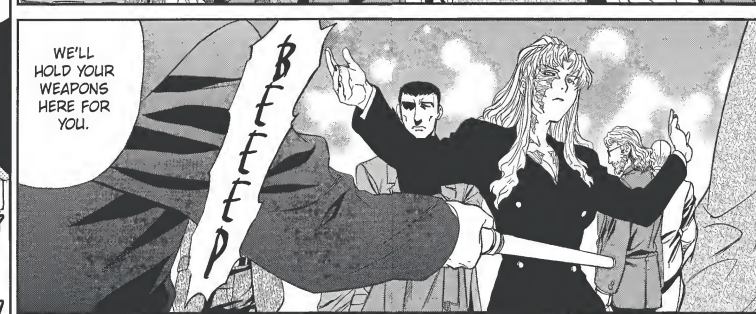
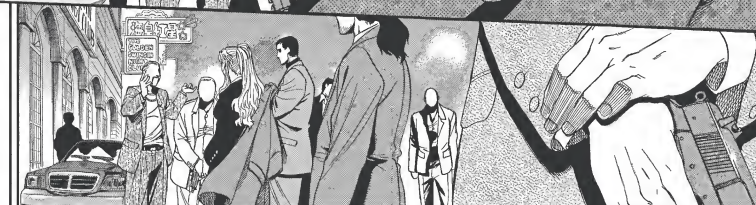
WELCOME,
MISS
BALALAIKA.

PLEASE
EXCUSE THE
SEARCH.



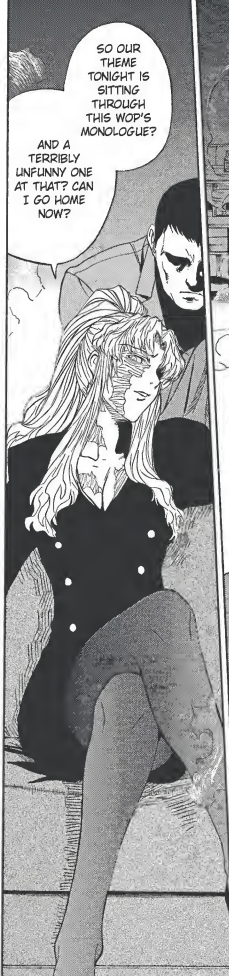
THANK
YOU.

GO AHEAD
MA'AM,
THEY'RE ALL
WAITING FOR
YOU INSIDE.



WE'LL
HOLD YOUR
WEAPONS
HERE FOR
YOU.





SO OUR
THEME
TONIGHT IS
SITTING
THROUGH
THIS WOP'S
MONOLOGUE?

AND A
TERRIBLY
UNFUNNY ONE
AT THAT? CAN
I GO HOME
NOW?



YO, MISS
BALALAIKA.

IS THIS YOUR
BIRTHDAY
PARTY? IT'S
PRETTY
EXTRAVAGANT.



I'M SORRY TO INTERRUPT YOUR FLIRTING SESSION, BUT I'M BUSY. LET'S GET THIS MEETING STARTED.

HEY, AMIGO.

THIS LADY'S A COUNTRY BUMPKIN. SHE DON'T KNOW WHAT MANNERS ARE.

CUT IT OUT, TOMASO.

OOH, YOU'RE SCARING ME.

YOU SOUND A LOT LIKE THIS AMATEUR COMEDIAN OVER HERE.

SOUNDS LIKE THE VODKA'S GOT YOU SHITFACED ALREADY.

MAYBE I OUGHTA SMACK YOU AROUND A BIT?



EXACTLY.
WE HAVE A PROBLEM THAT MUST BE SOLVED EXPEDITIOUSLY.



...TO FOLLOW UP ON THE MAID WHO STIRRED THINGS UP HERE A WHILE BACK.

...I'VE ASKED YOU ALL HERE FOR NO OTHER REASON THAN...

I'M SURE SOME OF YOU ARE ALREADY AWARE, BUT...



BREAK
OUT SOME
CHAMPAGNE
AND BAKE
'EM A HUGE
CAKE. AND
ON IT...

WE'LL
HOST A RECON-
CILIATION
PARTY FOR
THEM.

AHA!

YEAH,
THAT'S
PRETTY
SIMPLE,
SIR.

WE'LL
WRITE,
"WE'RE ALL
ONE HAPPY
FAMILY."

THROW IN
SOME TITTY
DANCERS AND
THEY'LL EVEN
BECOME
PENPALS.



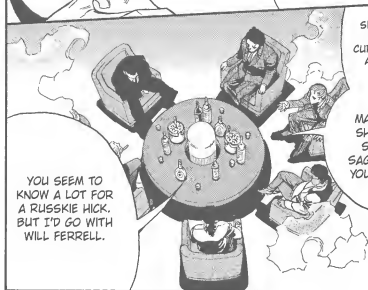
HER
OBJECTIVE
IS REVENGE.

I'LL
MAKE IT
SIMPLE.



THAT'S NOT
A BAD PLAN,
RONNY.

YOU HEADLINE
WITH THAT
ROUTINE AND
IT'LL BE NEAR
PERFECT.



YOU SEEM TO
KNOW A LOT FOR
A RUSSKIE HICK.
BUT I'D GO WITH
WILL FERRELL.

SINCE WHEN
DID THE
CUPOLA TAKE
A COMEDY
TOUR?

MAYBE YOU
SHOULD'VE
SET BOB
SAGET UP AS
YOUR BOSS?

HER TRUSTED
EMPLOYER AND
MASTER WAS
ASSASSINATED.

HER ENEMIES
ARE HERE IN
TOWN AND
SHE PLANS
ON TAKING
THEM OUT.





...I SEE.
YOU'RE WAY BETTER THAN VERROCHIO WHEN IT COMES TO GETTING ON MY NERVES.

YOU MIGHT EVEN LIVE A LITTLE LONGER IF YOU CAN WALK IT LIKE YOU TALK IT.



I HEARD IT WAS A STATUS SYMBOL TO EAT AT A FAST FOOD RESTAURANT IN YOUR COUNTRY.

EVEN PEOPLE LIVING IN TRAILERS EAT BETTER THAN THAT WHERE I'M FROM.

YOU LIKE FRUGALITY? OR DO YOU PUT...

...A SLICE OF A WHOLE COW BETWEEN BREAD THE SIZE OF A SUITCASE TO GET YOUR MONEY'S WORTH?

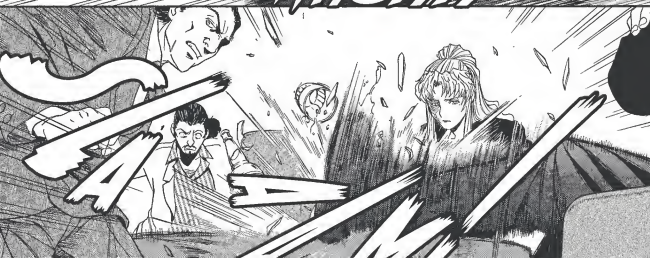


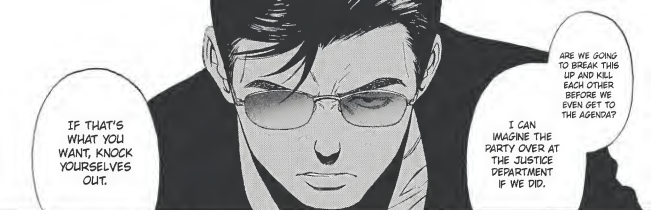
YOU STINKIN' RUSSIAN BITCH.

I CAN SHOW YOU IF YOU WANT.

SHP

WASH





IF THAT'S
WHAT YOU
WANT, KNOCK
YOURSELVES
OUT.

ARE WE GOING
TO BREAK THIS
UP AND KILL
EACH OTHER
BEFORE WE
EVEN GET TO
THE AGENDA?

I CAN
IMAGINE THE
PARTY OVER AT
THE JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT
IF WE DID.



THEY'RE
SOLDIERS.

AND NOT JUST ANY
SOLDIERS. THEY'RE
SPECIAL FORCES
SOLDIERS TRAINED
IN UNCONVENTIONAL
WARFARE.

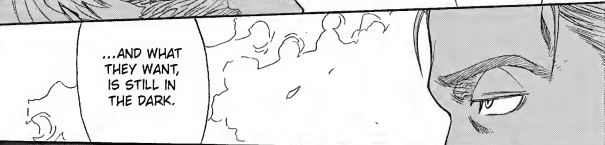
AND IF I
MAY STATE
ONE MORE
TROUBLING
FACT...

...THEY'RE HIDING
IN TOWN UNDER
ORDERS FROM
HIGHER UP IN THE
GOVERNMENT.

...LET'S
CONTINUE.

THE
TERRORISTS
WHO BOMBED
AND KILLED
HER MASTER...







WE MOVED
OUR MEN
UNDER
ORDERS
FROM BACK
HOME.

...WE HAD
NOTHING TO
DO WITH THE
BOMBING.

SAME WITH
THE GRINGO
SOLDIERS. WE
KNOW NOTHING
ABOUT THAT.

K TOK

G
U
L
P!



THEIR BOSS
PASTURIA'S
STANDING ORDER
IS TO KILL HER
ON SIGHT.

THE FARC
SWITCHED THEIR
ALLEGIANCE
TO OUR
ORGANIZATION
FROM THE
MEDELLIN CARTEL
THEY TOOK
DOWN.

THAT MAID IS STILL
FARC'S NUMBER ONE
MOST WANTED. WE
NEEDED HER DEAD
FOR OUR
RELATIONSHIP WITH
THEM TO RUN
SMOOTHLY.



WE COULDN'T
MOVE UNTIL SHE
MOVED ON HER
OWN.

THE MANSION
WAS UNDER
CONSTANT
SURVEILLANCE
BY THE LOCAL
COPS AND
PARATROOPERS.

THEY COULD'VE
TAKEN HER
OUT ANY TIME
THEY WANTED.

THERE WAS NO
REASON TO DO
SO UNTIL THIS
TOWN WAS
DRAGGED IN.

THEY KNEW
WHERE SHE
WAS—THE
LOVELACE
FARM IN
VENEZUELA.

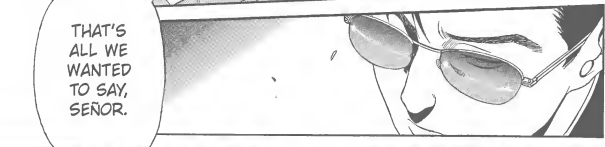


IF THAT'S
SO, HE WAS
PRETTY
SHARP.

NO.

REACHING OUT
TO THE MVR
ALSO COULD'VE
BEEN PART OF
HIS PLANS TO
HIDE THE MAID.

SO THE
MASTER
WASN'T
THAT
STUPID.





THAT'S ALWAYS THE CASE WITH BARBARIANS.

IF THAT'S THE DECISION OF THIS MEETING, AT LEAST PUT A BOUNTY ON HER HEAD.

US CIVILIZED PEOPLE DON'T KILL IF IT DOESN'T INVOLVE MONEY.



THAT'S WHAT WE'LL DO. I DON'T NEED YOU TO TELL ME THAT.

AS LONG AS THERE'S NO INTERFERENCE.



WE DON'T HAVE ANY FAVORS TO SELL TO YOU, NOR DO WE WANT TO BUY ANY OBLIGATIONS EITHER.

YOU CAN DO WHATEVER YOU WANT TO THE MAID.

WE DON'T CARE ONE BIT.



OUR ENEMY ISN'T THE MAID, IT'S WHO SHE'S AFTER.

CHANG.

YOU DAGO PIG.

IF YOU DON'T LIKE PAIN, GO BACK TO YOUR DRESSING ROOM AND WORK ON YOUR COMEDY ROUTINE.



EITHER WAY, THERE'S NOTHING TO GAIN BY BEING ON THE DEFENSIVE.

AN ANTI-DRUG CAMPAIGN THAT'LL SEND THE JUNKIES INTO A FIT OR...

...CAPTURE OR ASSASSINATE SOMEBODY IN ONE OF THE SYNDICATES HERE.

YOU SAY THEIR OBJECTIVE IS UNKNOWN?

THEIR INTENTIONS WERE OBVIOUS.



...WIPE
THEM OUT
BEFORE
THEY CAN
CARRY OUT
THEIR PLAN.

THE BEST
STRATEGY IS
TO PROMPTLY...



MAYBE THE
VODKA'S
WEARING OFF
AND YOUR
HANDS ARE
STARTING TO
SHAKE.

YOU'RE
CRAZY.
IT'S AN
ALCOHOLIC'S
FANTASY.

GUYS WITH
UNITED STATES
DOGTAGS
HANGING
AROUND THEIR
NECKS?

YOU MEAN
GO UP
AGAINST
THE
SPECIAL
FORCES?



YOU JUST
WANNA GET
BACK AT THE
AMERICANS. I'M
SAYING THAT'S
A NUISANCE.

I KNOW
YOU DON'T
REALLY MEAN
THAT, YOU
GODDAMNED
COMMIE.

IT HAS NOTHING
TO DO WITH
PETTY CROOKS
LIKE YOU GUYS.
GO BACK TO
SICILY AND CHASE
A SHEEP'S ASS,
YOU GUTLESS
WOP.

THIS IS A
PROBLEM THAT
ORGANIZATIONS
WITH INTERESTS IN
THIS TOWN HAVE
TO DEAL WITH.



WE DON'T
WANNA END
UP LIKE
PABLO
ESCOBAR.

WE DON'T
WANT ANY
PROBLEMS
WITH THE
AMERICANS.

WE GOT
NOTHING
TO DO
WITH THAT.

HEY HEY
HEY. CUT
IT OUT.

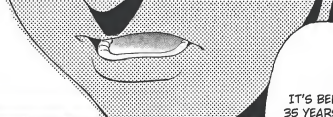


YOU WANNA
HUNT DOWN
THE
OUTSIDERS
LIKE THESE
TWO WANT?

OR-

CHANG.

WHAT DO
YOU THINK?



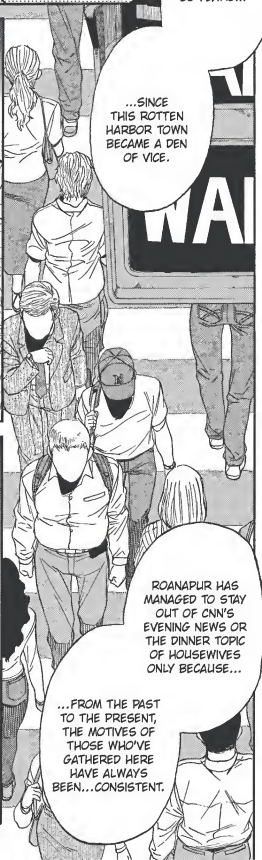
IT'S BEEN
35 YEARS...



THAT
IS...



...IT'S IN
OUR MUTUAL
INTEREST...



...SINCE
THIS ROTTEN
HARBOR TOWN
BECAME A DEN
OF VICE.



...TO LEAD THE
PUBLIC EYE AWAY
FROM OUR MORE
STIMULATING
BUSINESSES...

ROANAPUR HAS
MANAGED TO STAY
OUT OF CNN'S
EVENING NEWS OR
THE DINNER TOPIC
OF HOUSEWIVES
ONLY BECAUSE...

...FOR THE
PEACE OF MIND
OF THOSE WHO
ARE CROOKED.

...FROM THE PAST
TO THE PRESENT,
THE MOTIVES OF
THOSE WHO'VE
GATHERED HERE
HAVE ALWAYS
BEEN...CONSISTENT.



WE MAKE THE
LAWS. WE ARE
THE RULERS
HERE.

A MODERN DAY
LIBERTALIA.
A TAINTED
"ELSEWHERE."



BLESSED
WITH TIRELESS
HARD WORK
AND A LITTLE
BIT OF GOOD
FORTUNE, THIS
BACKWATER
TOWN...

THIS ENTIRE
TOWN, HAS
TRANSFORMED
INTO OUR
HIDE-OUT.

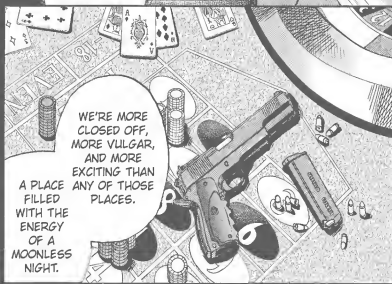
HEAVENLY OVERVIEW
THE
TOWN



OR
PERHAPS
EL REY.

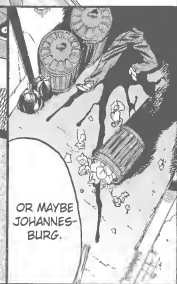


YOU CAN
TALK ABOUT
MYANMAR'S
ANGLO TOWN.

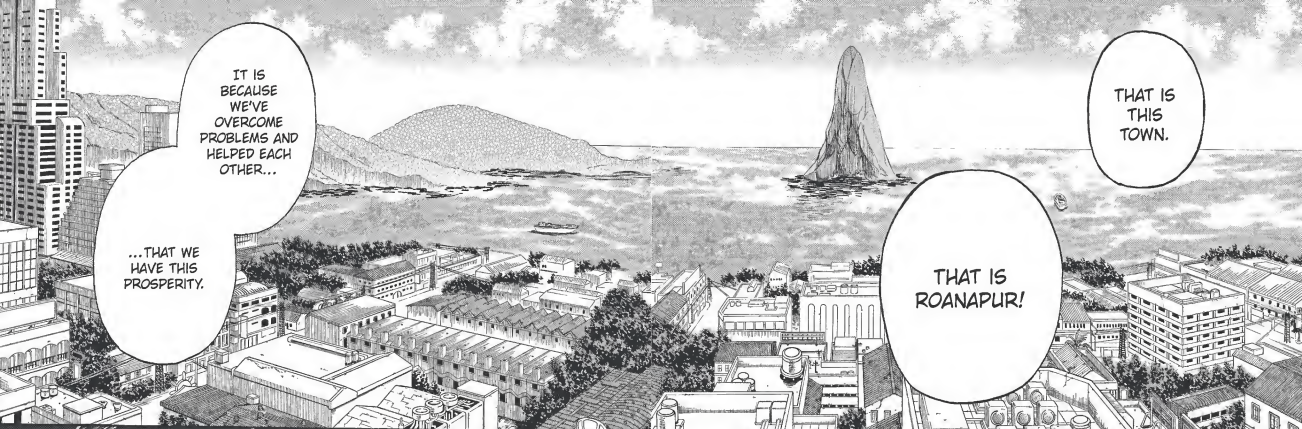


WE'RE MORE
CLOSED OFF,
MORE VULGAR,
AND MORE
EXCITING THAN
ANY OF THOSE
PLACES.

A PLACE
FILLED
WITH THE
ENERGY
OF A
MOONLESS
NIGHT.



OR MAYBE
JOHANNES-
BURG.



IT IS
BECAUSE
WE'VE
OVERCOME
PROBLEMS AND
HELPED EACH
OTHER...

THAT IS
THIS
TOWN.

...THAT WE
HAVE THIS
PROSPERITY.

THAT IS
ROANAPUR!



I ASK YOU TO
RESTRAIN
YOURSELVES
IN REGARDS
TO U.S.
GOVERNMENT
PERSONNEL.

AND OF
COURSE...



BUT IT'S
DELICATE
AND
FRAGILE.

ONCE WE ALLOW
THE LIGHT TO
SHINE IN, THERE
IS NOBODY TO
PROTECT US.

IF YOU ARE
WILLING TO
ABANDON ALL
OF THAT AND
INSIST ON
CHARGING
AHEAD...

...THAT'S
FINE. BUT...

...THAT MAID,
WHO COULD
POSSIBLY
BECOME A
LAND MINE.



THE TRIAD
ACTS WITH
THE SURVIVAL
OF THIS TOWN
IN MIND.

UNTIL IT
BECOMES
CLEAR THAT
THEIR
PURPOSE IS
TO MEDDLE
WITH LOCAL
AFFAIRS...

WE SHOULD
AVOID A
HEAD-TO-HEAD
CLASH WITH
THEM UNTIL THE
VERY LAST
MOMENT. THAT
IS WHAT I
BELIEVE.

ALLOW ME TO
STATE THE
POSITION OF
THE TRIAD.



PLEASE
REMEMBER
THIS.



IF WE
CONTINUE
SUSPECTING
EACH OTHER,
CONTINUE
PURSUING
OUR OWN
SELF-INTERESTS
...

WHO DO YOU
THINK WILL
BE LEFT
STANDING IN
THE RING AT
THE END?



NOT YOU,
NOT ME...

...NOT EVEN
THE RING
ITSELF.

...THERE WON'T
BE ANYBODY
THERE, LADIES
AND GENTLEMEN.



SHA A A A

EL SEÑOR CONOCE
MIS DEBILIDADES.
(THE LORD KNOWS MY
WEAKNESSES.)

PORQUE NADA ES POSIBLE
SIN LA GRACIA DE DIOS, TE PIDO
SEÑOR QUE LOS CONSIGNES COMO
CONSIDERES NECESARIO.
(BECAUSE NOTHING IS POSSIBLE WITHOUT
HIS GRACE, I ASK YOU LORD TO MAKE
ME AN INSTRUMENT OF YOUR WILL.)

PERMITE A ESTE DISCÍPULO
EVITAR LOS PECADO
ENVIADOS.
(ALLOW YOUR DISCIPLE
TO AVOID EVIL.)

Chapter 54: El Baile de la Muerte - Part XI

...POR TU DIVINA
GRACIA.
(...THROUGH YOUR
DIVINE GRACE.)

YOU DON'T
LOOK WELL.

YOU SHOULD
STOP TAKING
THOSE PILLS.
YOU'RE
OBVIOUSLY
OVER-MEDICATING
YOURSELF.

Y LLEVAR A CABO, CON
RECTITUD DE LOS
DISEÑOS DE TUS
PALABRAS...
(AND CARRY OUT, WITH
HONOR, YOUR DIVINE PLAN...)

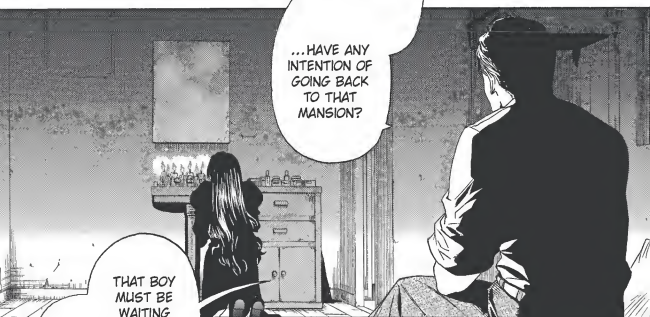
Y DÓTAME DE FUERZA PARA
QUE PUEDA ACOGER Y
SOBREPONERME...
(PROVIDE ME WITH THE STRENGTH
TO ACCEPT AND OVERCOME...)

A LOS RETOS QUE
ME IMPONES...
(...THE CHALLENGES YOU
IMPOSE...)





DON'T
YOU...



...HAVE ANY
INTENTION OF
GOING BACK
TO THAT
MANSION?

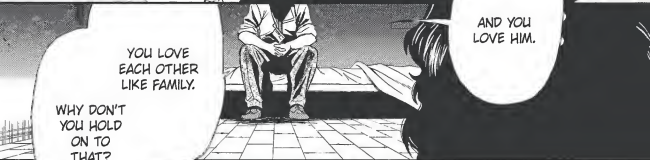
THAT BOY
MUST BE
WAITING
FOR YOU...



...AT THE
HACIENDA
WHERE THE
ORCHIDS ARE
BLOOMING.



HE LOVES
YOU.



YOU LOVE
EACH OTHER
LIKE FAMILY.

WHY DON'T
YOU HOLD
ON TO
THAT?

AND YOU
LOVE HIM.



REVENGE IS
MERELY A
MOTIVE.

WHAT
YOU'RE
ABOUT
TO DO...

WHERE
YOU ARE
LOOKING
NOW...

IS IT
REALLY
REVENGE?

...IS
SOMEWHERE
COMPLETELY
DIFFERENT, NO?

THE MASTER,
AND... THE YOUNG
MASTER... SHOULD
HAVE BEEN
BLESSED BY
HEAVEN... THAT'S
WHY...!

...

MY SINS
ARE MY
OWN...

...NO.

PERHAPS IT
MIGHT BE
BETTER TO
CALL IT
ATONEMENT.

RESPONSIBILITY?

BUT...

NOT REVENGE
NOR PRAYER
NOR
FORGIVENESS
...

NOT EVEN
DEATH.

IF A
RESPONSIBILITY
EXISTS THAT
YOU MUST
BEAR...

...THERE
WILL BE NO
ATONEMENT
NO MATTER
WHAT.

CONTINUING
ON THIS
PATH...

...WILL ONLY
LEAD YOU TO
ANOTHER
HELL.



I
KNOW YOU
UNDER-
STAND...
...WHAT IS
BEST, WHAT
ACTIONS
ARE TRULY
NECESSARY
AT THIS
MOMENT.

THAT
IS-

SHUT
UP.

KACHA

A TIME
WHEN...

DO YOU
REALIZE
THAT,
ROSARITA?

...ABOUT TO
RETURN TO
WHAT YOU
ONCE
WERE.

YOU
ARE...

...THE
FIRE OF
REVOLU-
TION WAS
IN YOU.

DRTP

DRTP



WHOA WHOA
WHOA! WAIT
WAIT WAIT!

DON'T
SHOOT!
IT'S ME!
IT'S
LEROY!

WA
A
A
A



THAT
WOON'T BE
NECESSARY.

ALL I
NEED
IS—

IF YOU WANNA
DANCE WITH
THE SPICS
WITHOUT AN
ESCORT, GO
RIGHT—



WHAT
THE
HELL,
MAN?!

YOU WANNA
SHOOT ME?!
FINE! GO
AHEAD! SHIT!



YOU CAN
GIVE ME A
THANK-YOU
KISS AS
A MATTER OF
FACT. BY THE
WAY...

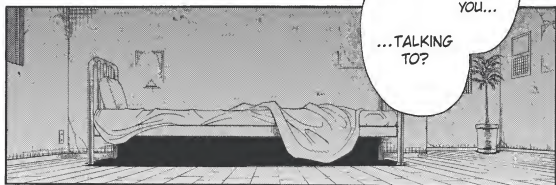
I MADE A
DEAL-IT'S
DOWN TO
MONEY
NOW.

I
GOT YOUR
CLOTHES
RIGHT HERE.
BASICALLY
EVERYTHING
YOU ASKED
FOR.

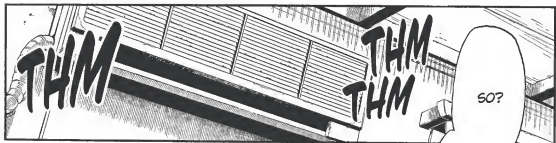
AND...



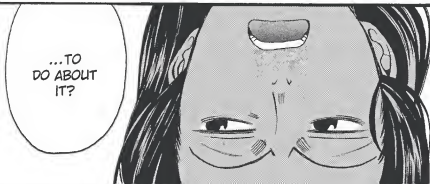
WHO
WERE
YOU...



...TALKING
TO?



SO?



...TO
DO ABOUT
IT?

WHADDAYA
WANT
ME...



FOR
STARTERS...

AND NOW
YOU COME
BACK AND
TELL ME
YOU CAN'T
DO IT
ALONE?

...DUTCH
AND I TOLD
YOU NOT TO,
BUT YOU
WENT OUT
THERE
THINKING
YOU WERE
HOT SHIT.



WELL...

...

YEAH.



SO DON'T
GIVE ME
THAT SHIT.

"YEAH"?

I AIN'T NO
JUVY COP OR
SOME KINDA
SOCIAL
WORKER.



NOBODY
WANTS
THEIR
TUMMY
CHECKED
WHEN IT
DON'T HURT.

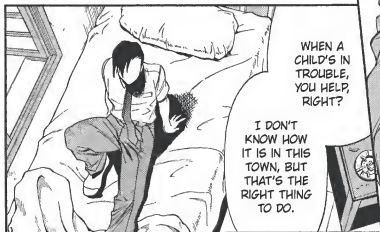
OF
COURSE
NOT.



I TRIED
ASKING
AROUND,
BUT...

EVERYONE
BACKED OFF
ONCE IT
WASN'T ABOUT
BUSINESS.
I DIDN'T GET
ANYWHERE.





WHEN A
CHILD'S IN
TROUBLE,
YOU HELP,
RIGHT?

I DON'T
KNOW HOW
IT IS IN THIS
TOWN, BUT
THAT'S THE
RIGHT THING
TO DO.



...ROCK.



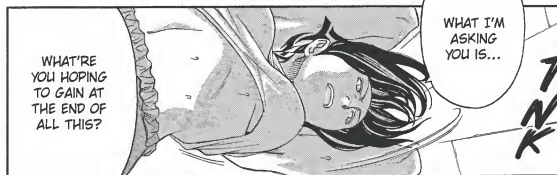
THAT'S A
TEXTBOOK
ANSWER.
BUT...

...THAT'S
TOO EASY.
I DON'T
BUY IT.

WHY DO
YOU CARE
SO MUCH
ABOUT
THAT
KID?



LISTEN.



WHAT'RE
YOU HOPING
TO GAIN AT
THE END OF
ALL THIS?

WHAT I'M
ASKING
YOU IS...



YOU'RE GONNA
GIVE ME A
TEXTBOOK
ANSWER AND
THEN GET
PHILOSOPHICAL
ON ME?

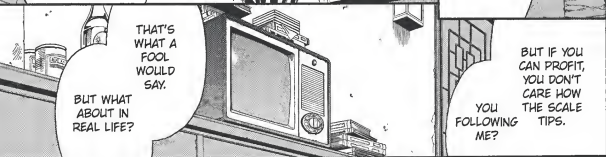
GAIN,
HUH?

THAT'S THE
WAY IT WAS
BACK WHERE
YOU'RE FROM
TOO.

LIKE IT OR NOT,
THIS IS HOW
THE WORLD
WORKS. LISTEN,
ROCK...

WHEN THE SCALE
TIPS A CERTAIN
WAY, THINGS MAY
NOT GO THE WAY
YOU WANT THEM
MOST OF THE
TIME...

THAT'S ALL
ANYONE IN
THIS TOWN
THINKS
ABOUT.



THAT'S
WHAT A
FOOL
WOULD
SAY.

BUT WHAT
ABOUT IN
REAL LIFE?

BUT IF YOU
CAN PROFIT,
YOU DON'T
CARE HOW
THE SCALE
TIPS.
YOU
FOLLOWING
ME?



AND...

THE
OPPOSITE
TOO.

YOU GO TOO
CHEAP, AND
THEY'LL BE
SUSPICIOUS.



IDIOTS
LIKE THAT
USUALLY
MISJUDGE
WHEN TO
BACK OUT.

THAT'S
HOW YOU
EITHER GET
LOCKED
UP...

HMF!

OR WIND UP IN
A FREEZER AT
THE MORGUE A
FEW POUNDS
HEAVIER FROM
ALL THE LEAD
PUMPED INTO
YOU.

WHAT'S
YOUR...

ROCK.

...TAKE?

...SELF-
SATISFACTION.

...

A REWARD
FROM
GARCIA...

POCKET
MONEY FROM
MR. CHANG,
AND...

TH
MP.

...SELF-
SATISFACTION.

WHEN
WE...

I THINK
YOU'RE...

...ABOUT
TO PULL A
REPEAT OF
LAST TIME.



...WERE
IN
JAPAN.

WHEN YOU
TRIED TO SAVE
THE "TOP
OYABUN"
SCHOOLGIRL.



THAT'S
NOT-



SKWK

SKWK

YES,
IT IS.



...DO YOU
EVER
CONSIDER
ME?

WHO
FOLLOWS
YOU IN
THERE?



YOU...

SWP

...HAVE A
TENDENCY TO
JUMP INTO A
FIREFIGHT
WITHOUT
CONSIDERING
THE
CONSEQUENCES.

...ESPECIALLY
WHEN YOU'RE
DETERMINED
TO GO
THROUGH
WITH
SOMETHING.



HMPH.

GRATEFUL,
HUH?



...YOU'RE
THERE FOR
ME WHEN I
NEED YOU
THE MOST.

I'M
GRATEFUL
FOR THAT.

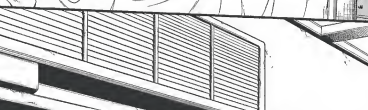


WE'RE WAY
PAST NEEDING
TO PATCH
UP THIS
RELATIONSHIP
WITH LIES.

I
KNOW.



IT'S
TRUE.

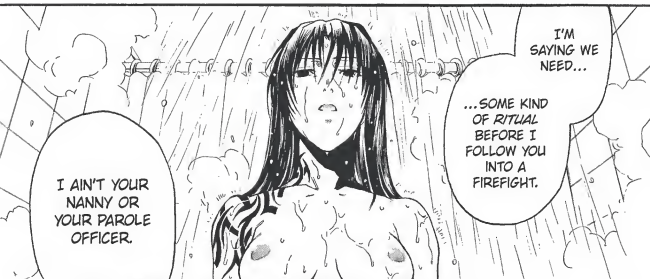


...ABOUT
ALL
THIS?

WHAT
DO YOU
THINK...



SO...



I AIN'T YOUR
NANNY OR
YOUR PAROLE
OFFICER.

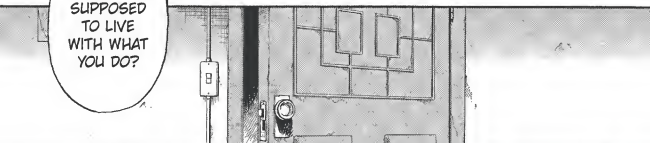
I'M
SAYING WE
NEED...

...SOME KIND
OF RITUAL
BEFORE I
FOLLOW YOU
INTO A
FIREFIGHT.



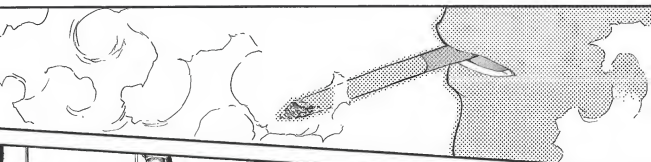
HOW AM I
SUPPOSED
TO LIVE
WITH WHAT
YOU DO?

I'M...
...ASKING
YOU...



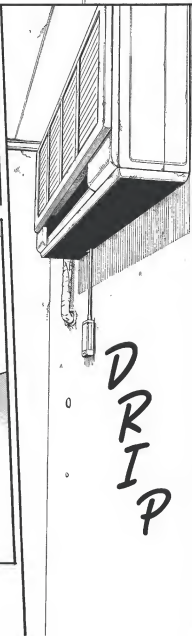
...JUST
GOING
WITH
THE
FLOW.

I'M
THROUGH
WITH...



WHEN WE
WERE IN
JAPAN...

YOU SAID
YOU WERE
A GUN.



D
R
I
P



IF YOU'RE
THE GUN...

I'M THE
BULLET.

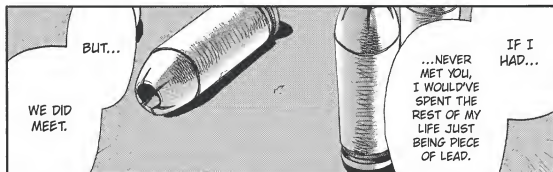


A BULLET
IS JUST A
PIECE OF
LEAD.

BUT...

WHEN THE
HAMMER
FALLS...

...THAT HUNK
OF LEAD HAS
THE POWER TO
BLOW AWAY
ANYTHING.



BUT...

WE DID
MEET.

IF I
HAD...

...NEVER
MET YOU,
I WOULD'VE
SPENT THE
REST OF MY
LIFE JUST
BEING PIECE
OF LEAD.



A BULLET...
IS ALWAYS
WAITING TO
GO OFF.

AND THE
ONLY THING
THAT CAN
FIRE A
BULLET IS...

A
GUN.



... "LIGHT
MY FIRE."

IT'S AN
OLD DOORS
SONG. DON'T
YOU KNOW
IT?

...ROCK.

WHAT?

WHAT YOU
SAID MAKES
ME WONDER...

AN
EXPENSIVE
UNSTOPPABLE
BULLET.

ONE THAT
CAN EVEN
KILL AN
INVINCIBLE
MONSTER.

WHAT KIND
OF BULLET
ARE YOU?

FULL
METAL
JACKET?

A
HOLLOW-
POINT?

OR A
GLASER
SAFETY
SLUG?

NONE
OF
THOSE.

YOU'RE A
SILVER
BULLET THAT
DOESN'T
KNOW WHERE
IT'S GOING.

BUT...

USE IT AT
THE WRONG
MOMENT, IT'S
ALL OVER.
THE MONSTER
EATS YOU.

WILL YOU STILL
USE IT? IS
THIS THE
RIGHT TIME TO
PULL THE
TRIGGER?

THAT'S
WHAT IT
MAKES ME
THINK,
ROCK.





WE'RE
OUT OF
WATER.



...I
UNDERSTAND
WHAT
YOU'RE
SAYING.

THAT'S
WHY...

...FROM
HERE ON
OUT, IT'S
YOUR
CHOICE.



GOTCHA.

HEY!
IT TAKES
BAHT. DON'T
USE NICKELS.
YOU'LL
BREAK IT.



KTHMP
KTHMP
KTHMP



ROCK.

THERE'S A
VENDING MACHINE
NEXT TO THE
DOWNSTAIRS
ENTRANCE. YOU
WANNA GO
BUY SOME?

WHA--?

SURE.





LET'S GET
THIS OVER
WITH,
ROCK.

WE GOTTA
GET BACK
TO THE BOAT
BY EVENING.



Chapter 55: El Baile de la Muerte - Part XII









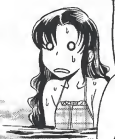
HAAA...

IT'S
SUCH A
BEAUTIFUL
POOL.

I DESERVE
THIS ONCE
IN A
WHILE...



...A FLOAT
AND BEACH
SANDALS
TOO, HUH?
YOU CAME
PREPARED.



YOU SNEAKY
LITTLE
BITCH. WHEN
DIDJA BUY
A BATHING
SUIT?

AND...



I-I...

WHAT
DOES IT
HAVE TO
DO WITH
YOU
ANYWAY?!

I JUST
HAPPENED TO
FIND A STORE
DURING OUR
SEARCH...

WELL, HELLO
TO YOU TOO.

YOU'RE
RIGHT,
IT'S GOT
NUTHIN'
TO DO
WITH ME.



YOU'RE
IN AN
AWFULLY
GOOD
MOOD.

HAPPY NOW,
YOU LITTLE
SHIT?





BUT WHAT ABOUT HIM?

WHAT?!



WE'RE LEAVING. WE AIN'T GOT MUCH TIME.

GET OUTTA THERE.

WHEN DID YOU BUY A BATHING SUIT...?

...



OH YEAH...?

YOU GOT SO EXCITED YOU FELL IN?



EXCUSE ME!

VENEZUELA IS NOT AN UNDEVELOPED COUNTRY!

IT'S RARE TO SEE SOMEONE GET EXCITED OVER A POOL THESE DAYS.

YOU GOT NO POOLS WHERE YOU COME FROM?



DO I LOOK
LIKE A
TYRANT WHO
WOULDN'T
EVEN ALLOW
THAT?

...YOU
DIDN'T
HAVE TO
KEEP IT A
SECRET
FROM ME.

...



...I'M
SORRY,
YOUNG
MASTER.



WE HAVE A
MAGNIFICENT
FOUNTAIN AT
THE MANOR,
BUT...

I JUST
PERSON-
ALLY
HAVEN'T
BEEN IN
A POOL
BEFORE!



...MY SANITY
WOULD BE
QUESTIONED
IF I SWAM IN
THAT.



YOU'RE
THE HEAD
OF THE
FAMILY...

AND YOU
COULDN'T
EVEN SENSE
THAT MUCH?
YOU IDIOT.



WHEN THE
BOSS IS
ACTING LIKE
THAT...

BUT IT
JUST GOES
TO SHOW
HOW LOYAL
SHE IS TO
YOU.

...HOW
COULD SHE
SAY SHE
WANTS TO
RELAX?

YOU'RE
HER
BOSS.



YO,
YOUNG
MASTER.

WHILE YOU
WERE OUT
RUNNING
AROUND
LOOKING FOR
FOUR EYES
ALL DAY...

...YOUR
SERVANT
HERE'S
BEEN
WATCHING
YOUR EVERY
MOVE!



F-
FABIOLA...!

I WILL
NOT PERMIT
YOU...

...TO
SPEAK TO
THE YOUNG
MASTER
LIKE THAT!

OWW!
CUT IT
OUT,
TWERP!!
AIIIEE!



YOU CAME ALL
THE WAY HERE
WITH ME. I
SHOULDN'T
HAVE WORRIED
YOU AS WELL...

I AM IN
A RUSH.
BUT...

...

SHE'S
RIGHT.



...GARCIA.

WITH REVV
HERE,
WE'RE
ALL SET.

ROBERTA
SHOULD
BE WITHIN
YOUR REACH
SOON.



GATA

I AM
SORRY.



IT'S
NATURAL
TO FEEL
RUSHED,
YOUNG
MASTER.

I'VE BEEN
INCONSIDERATE
OF MY
POSITION.



WE'VE GOT THOSE
SHE'S TRYING TO
TAKE OUT, THOSE
WHO ARE TRYING TO
TAKE HER OUT, AND
THOSE TRYING TO
TAKE ADVANTAGE
OF HER.

WE HAVE TO
UNTANGLE THEM
AND PUT THEM
ALL WHERE THEY
BELONG.

BUT...

THE HARD
PART IS
GOING TO BE
CAPTURING
HER.



IT'S...

...A
GAMBLE.



...BUT
IT'S
ALSO...



...WHAT
MAKES ALL
THIS...

...SO
INTERESTING.



YOU
HERE,
OLD
MAN?

IT'S
REVY,
FROM
LAGOON
TRADERS.

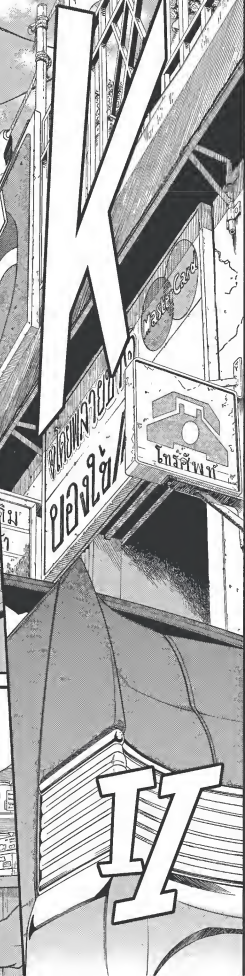


SH

WHO
THE HELL
IS IT?

IT'S TOO
FRIGGIN'
EARLY—

KK





I WAS
WORRIED
ABOUT THE
SMOOTHNESS
OF THE SLIDE.

OH IT'S
YOU,
REVV!

IT'S BEEN
A WHILE.
HOW'S THE
CUTLASS?



HMM?



LET'S NOT
STAND AROUND
HERE. COME
IN TO THE
WORKSHOP AND
I'LL TAKE A
LOOK AT IT.

IT
COULDN'T
BE
BETTER.

BUT I FEEL
LIKE IT'S
GETTING
KINDA LOOSE
AROUND
THE SEAR
RECENTLY.



OH, ESTO ES
SORPRENDENTE!



ACTUALLY,
POPS...



SOMETHING
ELSE?

YOU NEED
ME TO
BUILD YOU
SOMETHING
AGAIN?



I CAME
HERE FOR
SOMETHING
ELSE.



SO SHE
WAS
HERE.



...

ANOTHER
ONE?

A TALLER
VERSION OF
SHORT
STUFF HERE,
WITH
GLASSES,
RIGHT?

WANT ME
TO ARM
HER UP
TOO?



SHE WAS
BAO'S
REFERRAL.

SHE WAS A
FIRST-TIMER,
BUT I LET
HER IN.



TROUBLE?

NO.

NOT YET
ANYWAY.

WE'RE NOT
THE RIP-OFF
CHURCH. I'M
A GUNSMITH
AND IT'S JUST
A HOBBY.

SHE
ALREADY
HAD HER
OWN PIECE.

SH-CHAK

WHAT'D SHE
COME HERE
FOR?

GUNS?



SHE SAID SHE
WANTED ME
TO...

...RESTORE
IT SO IT
COULD BE
USED AGAIN.

IT WAS AN
ANTIQUE. A
FLINTLOCK
RIFLE.

EIGHTEENTH
CENTURY,
PRUSSIAN
OR SPANISH.



...I KNOW,
FABIOLA.

IT WAS
THE GUN ON
DISPLAY IN
THE HALL.



...YOUNG
MASTER!



ALL IT NEEDED
AFTER THAT
WAS SOME
CORDITE OR
GUNPOWDER TO
CHARGE IT...

...BUT
THAT'S
NOT MY
EXPERTISE.

KLICK

...BUT
ANYWAY...

IT HAD BEEN
KEPT SO WELL
ALL I HAD TO DO
WAS REPLACE
THE LEAF SPRING
AND CORRECT
THE WARP OF
THE FRIZZEN.



T-KLICK

...FOR THAT,
YOU WANT
"BLASTER"
TOH CHI!

YEAH.

I FIGURED
AS MUCH
FROM THE
GET-GO.





YOU
IDIOT.
THIS IS
ONE OF
KIND.

THE BUTT
OF THE
GUN'S...

...FOR
CRACKING
HEADS, ISN'T
IT?

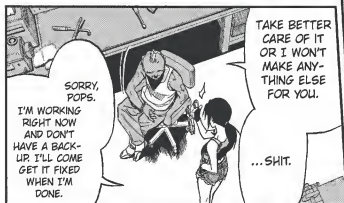


I MADE
IT SO IT
WOULD
SHOOT,
BUT-

HEY,
REVV.

WHAT'S
THIS? THE
GRIPS ARE
MISALIGNED.

YOU
BANGED
IT HARD,
DIDN'T
YOU?!



SORRY,
POPS.

I'M WORKING
RIGHT NOW
AND DON'T
HAVE A BACK-
UP. I'LL COME
GET IT FIXED
WHEN I'M
DONE.

TAKE BETTER
CARE OF IT
OR I WON'T
MAKE ANY-
THING ELSE
FOR YOU.

...SHIT.



WHAT'S
THAT GIRL
TRYING TO DO
WITH THAT
ANTIQUE?

YO!

REVV!



IF SHE
COMES BY
AGAIN, CALL
US AT THE
OFFICE.

LATER,
POPS.

ONE IS
"PAYBACK."

AND THE
OTHER IS
"GOING
POSTAL."

VROOO

HE USED
TO LIVE ON
SARTNAM
STREET A
LITTLE WHILE
AGO.

HE BOILED UP HIS
DIAPERS PRETTY
GOOD THANKS TO
ALL THE JUNK HE
WAS DOING, SO
NOW HE'S HOLED
UP IN HERE.

...THIS
TOH CHI'S
PLACE?

WHAT A
DUMP.

ROCK.

HE'S PARANOID.
THINGS COULD
GET COMPLICAT-
ED IF WE GO UP
THERE IN LARGE
NUMBERS.

WAIT HERE
WITH THE
YOUNG
MASTER.
THE MAID
AND I'LL GO.

UM...

QUIET.

...WHOA!

C'MON,
LOLITA.

LET'S
GO.

OH...

YES!



DON'T STEP ON THE FIRST BOARD PAST THE WIRE.

THERE'S A CASESHOT RIGGED UNDER IT.

...!



IF YOU DON'T WANNA BE RUNNING FOOTRACES ON A FAKE LEG...

...DON'T GO WANDERING AROUND IN HERE. YOU GOT THAT?

AND...



JUST AS I THOUGHT.

HE'S MORE PARANOID THAN EVER.

LISTEN UP, MAID.



YOU JUST REALIZED THAT? OF COURSE HE DOES.

DO ENOUGH SPEED AND SMACK AND EVERYONE ENDS UP LIKE THAT.

HEY! TOH!

...HOW TERRIBLE!

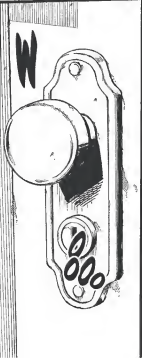
DOES HE WANT TO KILL EVERY VISITOR?



OPEN THE FUCKING DOOR, TOH! IT'S REVY!

I CAN HEAR THE AIR CONDITIONER! DON'T ACT LIKE YOU'RE NOT IN THERE!

YOU BETTER OPEN THE DOOR OR I'M GONNA KICK IT DOWN, YOU FUCKER!!!



REVV?
IS IT
REALLY,
REALLY
YOU?

CH
A

KLIK

KLAK

NO, IT'S
COOL

DO I LOOK
LIKE SOME-
BODY ELSE,
YOU IDIOT.

KCHIK

KLAK

I JUST
THOUGHT--?

YOU ARE
SICK.

THIS TOWN'S
REALLY FULL
OF JEDI
KNIGHTS.

SHE
MUST
BE AN
ADVANCE
GUARD OF
THE MARS
ATTACK
CORPS!!

WH

WAAA!

K-K

I THOUGHT
I BLOCKED
THE DEATH
RAY WITH
ALUMINUM
FOIL!

OKAY,
FUCKER!
I'LL TAKE
YOU ON!!

LIK

S-S-S-SO
YOU CAME TO
FINISH ME OFF
IN PERSON,
DIDN'T YOU?!

WHO IS
THAT?!

U
D
D

I'M
SERIOUS.

I DON'T
BELIEVE
IT!

HER
SAUCER'S
CALLED
ADAM-SOME-
THING. I
SAW IT.

WHOA,
WHOA.
RELAX.

HUH?!

ONE
OF THE
GOOD
ALIENS.

SHE'S,
UH...

W-WAIT...!

PLAY
ALONG,
BABY.
YOU DON'T
WANT A
BLOODBATH
EITHER,
DO YA?

SHE'S
TELLING
THE
TRUTH!

I CAME ALL
THE WAY
FROM VENUS
TO...UH...
SAVE YOU FROM
THE EVIL GRIP
OF THE CYLON
EMPIRE!!





T-H-W
TAK

THERE'S MORE THAN ONE SNITCH IN TOWN.

WHICH ONE WAS IT?

DON'T BE SHOOTIN' UP WHILE WE'RE TALKING, ASSHOLE.



NAH.

I THINK HE SAID HE WAS AN INFORMANT OR SOMETHING.



MM...

ONE FIX AND I'LL REMEMBER! C'MON, REVY?!

AW SHIT, I DON'T REMEMBER!



UH...

WHAT WAS HIS NAME...?



FOR PEACE IN THE UNIVERSE.

I'LL SEND OVER SOME SHIT FOR YOU THAT'S NOT BROWN ONE OF THESE DAYS, SO THINK HARD.

HELL NO. I'M NOT FUCKING AROUND.



...THAT'S IT...

...ROY...



K
CHK

RICHIE LEROY!



BREN CAN
ROUND UP
ENOUGH
MEN.

I'M
BACK.

HEH HEH.
YOU
CLEAN UP
GOOD.

IS THAT
ALL
RIGHT?

BREN'S PLAN IS
TO FIGHT THE
MAIN FORCE
TOGETHER WITH
YOU, BUT...

THE GUYS YOU'RE
LOOKIN' FOR ARE
SCATTERED
ACROSS SEVERAL
MOTELS IN THE
CITY.

BUT...



...

THAT WILL
BE JUST
FINE.

I DON'T
KNOW HOW
TO THANK
YOU.

By
Rei
Hiroe

THIS IS
WHEN I
WAS IN
JUNIOR
HIGH.

I DON'T
LIKE
THIS.

BLACK LAGOON

~Viva! Youth!~

AGE 13

...THIS
AGAIN?

HEY,
REVV...

YOUR
EYES
ARE
SCARY!!

SLAM

WHAT
THE FUCK
IS THIS?!

AGE 14

I'VE
BEEN
THROUGH
THIS
ONCE
BEFORE.

I
SHOULD
BE USED
TO-

*SEE
VOL.1

SH-SH-SH-
SHUT UP!!
IT'S THE
SCHOOL
RULES!!

SNEAK



YOU
THINK THAT
HAIRCUT'S
COOL?
DO YA?

SHUT
UP,
DICK-
HEAD!!

STOP
LOOKING
!!

THAT'S
WHY I
DIDN'T
WANNA
SEE YOU
GUYS!!

← AGE 12

BENNY?!

WHOA!!
HE'S
GOT THE
BULLYING-
VICTIM
AURA
GOIN' ON!!



WELL
HELLO...

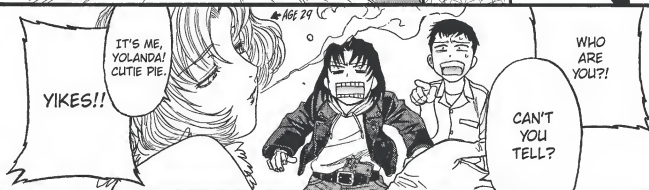
...MY
LITTLE
DARLINGS.

AND
SO...

WHERE'S
DUTCH?!

HE
FIGURED
IT OUT
AND RAN
AWAY!!

BUT
DUTCH
HASN'T
BEEN
HERE.



IT'S ME,
YOLANDA!
CUTIE PIE.

YIKES!!

WHO
ARE
YOU?!

CAN'T
YOU
TELL?



SHIT!
EDA!

SHE
RUN OFF
TOO?!

SERIOUSLY
?!

EDA'S
GOT AN
INTEREST-
ING LOOK
TOO.

BUT I
DON'T SEE
HER
AROUND.
OH, EDA?



I've looked
all over
for you
Captain!

...WHO
ARE
YOU?



W
H
A
A
A
T
?!!

How
could you
forget?!

It's me
Boris!! Your
Senior
Sergeant!!

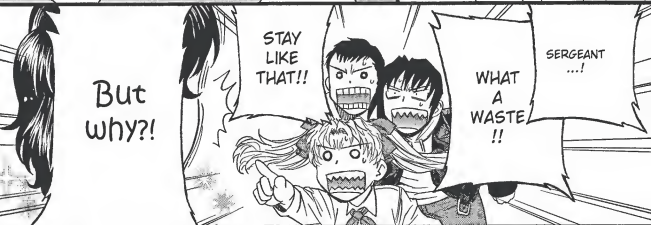


Before

After

I was
teased for
being
scrawny!

So I
joined the
military to
toughen up!!



But
why?!

STAY
LIKE
THAT!!

WHAT
A
WASTE
!!

SERGEANT
...!

AFTERWORD

HEY, IT'S HIROE.
THE ROBERTA ARC IS TURNING OUT TO
BE LONGER THAN EXPECTED.
BUT IT'S THE TURNING POINT AND
CONTAINS THINGS THAT BECOME
INTEGRAL TO THE REST OF THE STORY,
SO I HOPE YOU ENJOY IT. HAVING SAID
THAT, THERE'LL BE LOTS AND LOTS OF
SHOOTING COMING UP THAT I HELD
BACK ON IN THIS VOLUME.

SHOUT OUTS TO THE FOLLOWING
PEOPLE.

EDITOR/MR. WOO
ASSISTANTS/ITAKO, TODA, AZUMA

COOPERATION
ENGLISH/DANIEL KANEMITSU
RUSSIAN/MILITARY HISTORY/JUGO
TSUKUDA, ITSUKI AKIBA

COLORING/ NE-YAN

SPECIAL THANKS
KSC
ALTER/MAX FACTORY

+
ALL THE FANS.

I'M SKIPPING MY FRIENDS THIS TIME.

I'LL SEE YOU IN VOLUME EIGHT.

-REI HIROE, SEPTEMBER 20, 2007



The FARC

The *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) was established as the military wing of the Colombian Communist Party in 1964. Since its formation, the FARC has waged a guerilla war against the Colombian government and perceived U.S. influence in the region. In addition to carrying out numerous terrorist attacks, the FARC has managed to gain control of large areas of rural Colombia. In the 1980s the FARC became involved in drug trafficking with the infamous Medellín cocaine cartels, warring with some and striking deals with others. The FARC also developed ties with the IRA. Currently the FARC is still active, and the guerilla war continues. Despite several attempts at peace talks, no lasting agreements with the Colombian government have been reached.

Like many of the characters in *Black Lagoon*, Roberta is running away from the horrors of her past life. Service as a maid in the Lovelace household was a cover at first but soon became a new life entirely, and one she desperately wanted to hold on to. The assassination of Garcia's father is not only the catalyst for events in the "Baile de la Muerte" story arc, it's also a turning point for Roberta. Her story may also pose a grim question to all the characters in *Black Lagoon*: when your soul is burdened with the darkest of sins, is there any chance of redemption?

The U.S. SOCOM (United States Special Operations Command) is a joint command that oversees the various special operations forces of the U.S. military. It includes units from the U.S. Army such as the 75th Ranger Battalion and U.S. Army Special Forces (the Green Berets), the U.S. Navy (SEALS), the Air Force (1st Special Operations Wing), and the U.S. Marine Corps. Some of the most highly trained unconventional warfare and anti-terrorism units in the world, such as the 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment Delta (Delta Force) and the Naval Special Warfare Development Group, are under SOCOM command.

Major Caxton was involved in Operation Eagle Claw, the failed attempt to rescue American hostages held by Iran in 1980. The mission was to be conducted by the newly created Delta Force but turned into a disaster because of a helicopter crash at a desert staging area. Major Caxton's service in the Special Forces goes back to Vietnam, and memories of that conflict still haunt, and perhaps guide, his actions in the present.

